# We are here—Why?

Edna Wadsworth Moody

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# WE ARE HERE—WHY?

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A Study of
Life's Meaning

BY

EDNA WADSWORTH MOODY

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OF

## RICHVILLE-STANDISH AT SEBAGO LAKE, MAINE

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# Part One

## MAN'S COÖPERATION WITH THE DIVINE PLAN FOR HIS EVOLUTION

"And all This, and all that you see, and all that you think, and all that you experience, is the evidence of Yourself,

Yourself coming to you over the ages.

Therefore go forth—and be in truth thine own Creator—

No longer in fear and trembling, but in kingship and power, meeting the mystery of the world."

—*Edward Carpenter.*

# WE ARE HERE—WHY?

## I

## THE GOAL

MANY times of late years I have stood in a laboratory before a framed magazine illustration. Beneath a sullen sky, in front of the far distant horizon, a massed procession of human beings surge along the road. You see them leaving the picture at your left and returning in the foreground—a ruthless, crushing, hurrying crowd. A steel-faced magnate, with jaw tight and fists clenched, ploughs ahead, destroying all who oppose his progress. An eager, resolute old man clings to the king's scarlet robe; a red-haired woman clutches the sleeve of a brilliant court official. Faces are there restless, strained, cunning, and cruel. You see hopelessness and failure and misery; you see outstretched arms in wretchedness—bearded men in despair. To their left rises a hill. Upon this elevation occupying the full upper center of the picture is the pathetic figure of the Christ—the Lover of Men—on the cross. Even he—yet how can it be possible—the most glorious individual ever clothed in flesh—fails to divert their attention. He arouses not even a ripple of interest. The obsessed humanity sweep on. All alike are moving toward an unseen goal.

And beneath, the caption reads: ". . . . and worst of all there was no goal."

Such is our tragic course thru life, along a path that apparently leads to no goal—struggling, hurtling, hectic with desire, and yet when our object is

achieved—unsatisfied. Attainment without peace—a false goal reached and passed. Again we push forward in hot pursuit and—amazing as it is—on the same path as before.

That maelstrom is all about us today; not one of us is entirely free from its disturbing influence. Try as we may we cannot avoid being involved in this feverish rush. I want you to stop with me. I want you to stand aside and find a proper perspective of that turbulent procession. Why are they here? Why are we here? I want you to remain long enough to think about Nature's laws, to recognize the Intelligence behind them, and to learn how these laws affect us as individuals. I beg of you to glance to your left. That is all we need at the start—an arrested attention to the deeper significance of living!

If we misunderstand the purpose of life, we do not put the most into it nor extract from it the best it has to give. There *is* a definite goal. There is a path that leads to it—to be found by those who make the search. And in the travelling of this path is the triumph of peace, happiness, and joy.

## II

# THE PHYSICAL REALM

WE are here! We find ourselves in a world made up of physical matter, with a body made of the same physical material. We are provided with eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and a surface of skin underlaid with nerves. We have the use of interior physical senses—such as hunger, thirst, fatigue, and pain; and we have the muscle sense. Sensations arise in the brain as a result of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and from the sense of pressure, heat, and cold. Thru the use of our organs of sense, we get to know the physical world.

All the material of this physical world is made up of one or more of about ninety-two elements. They bear an ordered relation to each other. There are, for instance, gases that we breathe from the atmosphere—oxygen and nitrogen. There are oxygen and hydrogen that we drink in water; oxygen and carbon that together make the carbon-di-oxid gas that we breathe out from the lungs. There is carbon in trees, in coal, in rocks, in oils; the diamond is its purest form. There are gold, silver, platinum, iron, sulfur, rubidium, radium—the list runs on. Of all the elements hydrogen is the lightest and uranium is the heaviest.

A few years ago in New York City, the Industrial Chemists showed a moving picture of a mass of asphalt taken thru an ultra-microscope. Asphalt is not an element, but a combination of elements united in such a way as to form a different substance—and therefore called a *chemical compound.* A solid appears to us to be a stationary, impenetrable object.

The ultra-microscope unveiled truths unseen by the naked eye. The colloidal particles of the asphalt were rushing hither and thither in a state of intense activity. Altho the chemists had reasoned this to be the fact, yet here before their eyes was graphic proof!

It has recently become known that the infinitesimal atom is not the simple entity it was believed to be. Instead of being indivisible the most recent authority tells us that an atom is built up on many electrons; the electrons move about in such manner as to make the atom-structure "analogous to that of a solar system."[1] Each atom may be thought of as a miniature universe by itself.

The difference between any one element and another—between iron and lead, for example—is in the number and arrangement of the electrons constituting the atom. The unceasing motion of these atoms—these "solar systems"—gives each element an individual rate of vibration. If silver, for instance, should change its special number of vibrations per second, it would no longer be silver.

Providence has wisely furnished us with eyes incapable of responding to the perpetual movement of the atoms composing elements; fortunately, eyes are made to see objects as a whole. The organ of sight is an instrument constructed to be acted upon by no greater number of vibrations each second than those of violet light—764 trillions, and no fewer than those of red light—398 trillions. What we do see with the physical eyes is what we are capable of sensing between those two extremes. We look at a gold ring. The vibration peculiar to the element gold is communicated to the surrounding ether. The optic nerve receives from the ether this same rate of vibration which is transmitted to the

[1] Hildebrand in *Principles of Chemistry*

brain. The brain responds with the same rate of movement—and its owner interprets it as gold.

We look at a glass of water. It is as clear as crystal. We observe it thru the microscope and find in it many objects endowed with life, but their vibrations are too rapid to affect the unaided optic nerve. On the other hand, vibrations too slow to be responded to by the eyes may move at a rate that produces an effect upon the ears as sound. And so with the nose, mouth, and skin—all receivers sensitive to the particular vibrations to which they are fashioned by nature. They give rise to smell, taste and touch—or pressure and temperature.

Each organ of sense sends on to the brain its individual vibrations and tells its own particular story of the object. A blind man gets ideas of a thing thru other senses than sight; a deaf man other than that of hearing. But were it possible for us to imagine ourselves born without a single physical sense in working order, would we—as Egos—bear any appreciable relationship to the physical world—could we become conscious of it? A book placed in the hand would meet with no response; there would be no reaction from it; we could not feel it and therefore could not perceive it. We could get no knowledge of any material object, nor of anybody, nor of ourselves. There would be no way in which we could become aware of our own existence on the physical plane. We arrive at a knowledge of this physical realm, then, thru a process of response to special numbers of vibration. Balzac said that Motion and Number give rise to all phenomena and that, in a sense, motion is number in action.

Years ago, I arrived early at a studio for a song rehearsal that was to illustrate a lecture on "Bells." The lecturer was showing to a guest Chladni's experiment. She sprinkled sand on a horizontal brass plate clamped to a vertical rod passing thru

its center. She drew a violin bow back and forth over the edge of the plate till she got a clear, resonant, musical tone. The grains of sand began to hop about—like rain on a hard pavement—gradually assembled into geometrical forms arranged around the center of the disk, and ceased to move. The sand had reached a state of equilibrium in harmony with the vibrations of that particular musical note. She made a fresh start, produced a higher musical tone. The sand assumed other geometrical figures finer and more complex. The higher the musical pitch, the finer and more complicated the geometrical form became. I was young at the time and was profoundly impressed by the intimate connection between form and sound vibrations. At that period I did not know that Pythagoras—whose wisdom had descended thru the ages—had said, "Know God Who is Number and Harmony."

This experiment was a revelation of the relationship between *mathematics*—the science which treats of magnitudes, quantities, and number—and *music*, rhythmic tones. Physical matter in the shape of sand, and physical apparatus were the mediums thru which this relationship was manifested. One of the uses of physical material is its service in the revelation of higher relationships, and its disclosure of principles which transcend the physical field. It is a means by which knowledge of the truths of realms unseen are unveiled. Our physical sense, aided by intuition and reason, teach us truths beyond perception by use of the organs of sense.

The physical world—that marvel of mathematical harmonies—so full of charm and beauty, is a necessity for the development of the Ego. Thru the receipt of the vibrations of physical matter by the sense organs of the physical body, the human being becomes conscious of things outside of self. Seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling, he be-

comes aware of himself as the one who sees, who tastes, who perceives. Once conscious of self, he becomes conscious of others—" other selves." He becomes conscious of his relation to them and to the outside world in all its varied manifestations—a world which, thru science, lies ready to disclose divine secrets.

Our physical senses, therefore, are for use. Accurate observation is a necessity for one's life and well-being on the physical plane. Civilization has evolved from savagery by means of the keen, exact observation of nature's facts, by means of their application, and by educing the laws and principles that underlie them. Physical matter, when compared to the permanent spiritual realities, may be said to be a lower reality on this present plane of being. When rightly understood, however, in this immediate stage of evolution, its place and meaning can scarcely be overestimated.

Physical science—" the facts of nature classified and systematized "—is the study of the universe created by God and called by Him " good." It is the study of the working plan of God; it reveals His working mind—His methods of procedure—His laws that govern being. Since God created the world, and its truths have their Source in Him, they should be observed and studied with reverence. Together, the organs of sense, and reason—reason which complements the limitations of the senses—lead to knowledge of real things, permanent realities that lie beyond the physical. They bring to light truths that are a disclosure of infinite principle. The physical realm is a divine revelation. In it, we perceive the thought of God and His Order and Law. It effects a partial unveiling of God Himself.

## III

## THE PSYCHICAL REALM

ALTHO the physical realm embraces all that can be perceived by the physical organs of sense, it does not include even the main part of everything that exists. The material realm itself, as we know, extends beyond the limit of physical sight, even beyond what the microscope—a finer eye—discloses. Beyond the physical is the superphysical, still material but of a more delicate quality. Beyond the superphysical—there—is the realm of the conscious soul. Beyond again is found the region of Spirit.

With the physical senses, we cannot perceive thought, nor peace, nor justice, and yet they have as real an existence and even a more permanent character than rocks, trees, or houses. The psychical realm includes activities of the mind, the morals, and the emotions. Reason, for instance, is not material. It is an activity of the conscious mind. It uses the facts of the material world as one uses dumbbells in a gymnasium. Feeling is not material; it expresses itself thru the physical, but it is an experience of the soul. Reason and feeling both belong to the realities of psychical experience.

Transcending the psychical is the spiritual—all that is related to Pure Spirit. Peace—a sort of spiritual velvet—and love are spiritual *realities*. A mother's love cannot be seen, not the love itself, for it belongs to the spiritual realm. This spiritual reality, however, expresses itself thru the physical organism; it produces physical effects. Its presence is proven by the light in her countenance—it shines

in her eyes and gives buoyancy to her movement. But love cannot be perceived by the physical senses. It is an essence in spiritual reality. In the Spiritual is the Source of all Life and Light that is manifested in the soul—in the psychical existence of man.

In the psychical realm are hatred, jealousy, cowardice, meanness, impatience, and anxiety—all destructive qualities. In this realm, too, are friendship, honesty, kindness, sweetness, charm—all constructive qualities. These are utterly dissimilar in nature from physical objects. The psychical realm is the realm of thought, desire, emotion, self-control, initiative, will-power. It is the region of one's character—of all mental activities—of one's aspirations and inspirations. One's intuitions and religion spring from the spiritual and become conscious possessions of the soul. It is the spiritual and psychical being who is the real person; the physical, his clothes. The yard-stick that measures in the physical world is unknown in the psychical; its values are not calculated in the same terms. It is an inner world as contrasted with an outer. But the expression of the psychical and spiritual in our earth-life is dependent upon God's outer manifestation—physical matter. The whole physical realm subserves the ultimate purposes of the Soul and Spirit.

## IV

## LAWS IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD

EVEN a child knows that if he pulls away his hand and removes the support from his toy, it will fall to the floor. He has encountered gravitation. Bodies fall according to exact law. The nearer a falling body gets to earth the faster it travels, and the exact rate of its increasing movement as it nears the ground can be worked out mathematically. If a man wants to drive piles, he can calculate, knowing the weight of the hammer, just the height necessary to produce the desired force.

We row a boat up stream; our force is exerted against the current. We encounter the flowing water forcing us backwards. Our force is exerted in one direction, the force of the flowing water in the opposite direction. If the force used in rowing exactly equals that of the moving stream, the boat will be practically motionless. In any case it will follow certain fixed laws governing the two component forces acting upon it.

All machines conform to law; law underlies the action of light, heat, sound, and electricity. All chemical processes—everything in the physical world—act and react according to definite law.

What would happen if this were not the case?

We want a glass of water. We turn the pitcher nose downward toward the glass and pour; the water fills the glass. With a turn of the wrist we bring the pitcher back to its upright position. Suppose that the next time we attempted to fill a glass the water clings to the pitcher and will not pour. We

bring the pitcher back to its upright position, and the water begins to flow up over the sides. We seize a cloth to wipe it but the cloth will not absorb the water. We look, and the water is rolling off like hail stones. What are we going to do?

Ah! but Nature plays us no such tricks. There are definite laws that govern the action of water which is sometimes vapor, again a liquid, another time snow, and, oftentimes, ice. When it is in the form of vapor, there is a reason for it; if it is liquid, snow, or ice, there is a cause for that, too. Water responds to law. We know that water may be depended upon to seek its own level, to run down hill, to exert definite pressure under given conditions. It follows laws of gravity. Were this not true, the physical world would be a realm of utter confusion. James Watt made the first engine propelled by steam. He worked with the unshaken confidence that steam, under the same conditions, could be counted on to act the same—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. And so today, faithful old steam engines are hauling our trains, grinding our grain, generating our electricity, and performing multifarious operations—all according to the principle seized upon by James Watt.

The physical world is a stately kingdom of law and order. Nature manifests principles, properties, and qualities that reflect—as one's image in a limpid pool—the Mind of the Creator.

You have living abroad, let us say, a practically unknown relative who saw you last when you were an infant. She has met a friend of yours, and sends back a number of gifts to you and your family. Some of the gifts she bought, some of the gifts she made herself. Is it possible for you to learn anything about this relative from her action and handiwork? You can correctly judge her to be thoughtful, as well as generous with money, time, and labor.

She has excellent taste, a love and appreciation for the beautiful. The gown for your daughter shows wonderful harmony in color and beauty of design. Moreover, she has shown the highest art in dressmaking. She is accurate and observing, certainly in the creation of clothes. She must be ambitious to learn; she has the power of initiative, for she was not pushed into learning thru necessity. She did not exercise her initiative in order to provide for herself. She sent your husband a set of Shakespeare uniquely bound in leather by herself. She made you a complete set of china decorated in simple and charming design. She is industrious. versatile, and artistic. From these few physical things, you have learned facts concerning the mind and character of your unknown relative. Her real self is reflected in the gifts of her own creation.

And so are reflected in His works, the qualities of Him by Whom all things were made—the Supreme Being as the Logos, the Creator of the physical universe. Everywhere about us, in the world of God, is the evidence of law and order. Everywhere is the expression of the same Creative Mind, working and revealing Itself thru Its varying manifestations. Everywhere is ample evidence of an identical Mind in the widely varying kingdoms of nature.

The physical world is a part only of creation. Thru conscientious, accurate, orderly, and intelligent scientific observation and experiment, a truth has been demonstrated—the material realm is governed by law and order. This reflects law and order in the Mind of the Creator. And of one point we may be sure: since the Mind of God is one of law and order, He does not confine the expression of these to the physical plane alone! The psychical and spiritual, too, are His. He is the Creator of the entire universe. *Such fundamental principles as*

*law and order are manifested on all planes of creation—in the psychical and spiritual and physical. The law of Cause and Effect governs thruout them all.*

## V

# LAWS IN THE PSYCHICAL WORLD

"WHAT kind of a person are you?"

If we know certain psychical facts about yourself, we can tell you. Ordinarily, if the ingredients and method to be used to make a chemical compound are known, the chemist can identify the substance in advance. The human soul and the chemical compound—each—one thing being true, an inevitable result follows.

Wherefore—tell us your thoughts. Solomon the Wise said, " As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Your thoughts—the sort of thoughts you allow yourself—conform to fixed, psychical law and determine your status as a human being. " Tell me what a man thinks and I will tell you what he is." In thrusting your hand into the fire, you suffer physical injury; in thinking evil thoughts you destroy your character. You suffer psychical harm and drag down your soul to lower levels. The physical passes away, but the spiritual endures.

*" Let us inspect our thoughts that we do no evil, for as we sow so shall we reap."* Thus said the Buddha six hundred years before Christ.

Your heart is filled with love, your neighbor's heart with hatred; each state becomes a cause that sets in motion its special chain of results. A magnet attracts to itself iron filings; love attracts to itself wholesome joys and the beneficences of life. Hatred attracts hatred; it draws to itself spite, malice, retaliation and revenge. Hatred or love or a magnet—each—exerts, according to its nature, physical, psychical, or spiritual attraction.

The effect of love reaches to all planes of being,

even to the physical realm. It produces a healthful state of blood, bone, and tissue in the physical body. It brings about a physical condition that combats sickness and disease. A heart full of love creates physical buoyancy and exuberant well-being. Psychically it has an upbuilding influence on the character. It is laden with unselfishness, contentment, and happiness. Indeed, love is the sunshine of the soul; like sunshine it promotes growth, and develops the plants of sweetness, unselfishness, sympathy, and understanding of others. Hatred, in exact reverse, produces an unhealthful state of blood, bone, and tissue; it lowers the vitality of the physical body, and lessens its power of resistance to germs; it invites sickness and disease; it is laden with selfishness, discontent, and unhappiness; it demolishes the character. In fact, hatred is continued dampness and storm, in which—as on the physical plane—flowers rot, and fungus growth springs into being. Thus blossoming good disappears and rank error is nourished into life.

Give way to any degree of anger and to that degree you must suffer its unavoidable penalties on the physical and higher planes. At sea level water boils at 212° Fahrenheit; quite as inevitable is the effect of anger from peevishness and petulance to its extreme form of fury and rage. Consider, you who give way to wrath, who burst forth in scathing words, whose voice trembles! As your emotion gains impetus, you cease to reason, you cannot reason. It is a law that governs emotion. While you are controlled by this malignant force, due to your lack of will, you are unable to think straight. This is one of the psychical effects of the psychical reality—anger. While it lasts, you are its slave; you are sucked into a maelstrom of perverted energy. And when you get out, the inevitable reaction sets in; you are psychically spent, physically limp.

Psychically, you have reduced your power of self-control. Next time, it will be still more difficult to restrain yourself because you have dug a groove for an ugly habit and have given a strong wrench to your moral structure. You are brought face to face with the truth that you are a moral weakling! Physically, you have overheated your blood, you have thrown your health out of equilibrium. Very likely you have incited the production of uric acid which may cause rheumatism or worse; violent anger has resulted in apoplexy and death!

As destructive as anger is in its effects, there is an equally powerful psychical force that can be set up against it and even more potent—self-control. Self-control is the determining factor between good and evil, and it is a factor that can be manipulated—as far as you are concerned—by only one created being on earth—yourself. Its exercise creates the difference between happiness and unhappiness, between progress and retrogression; it separates heaven and hell.

The exercise of self-control, in fact the exercise of all soul activities, are not so much dependent upon surroundings as we think. The same poise, restraint, and wisdom is in the long run shown by a man wherever he finds himself. What is it that makes the Eskimos of Smith Sound—the "Arctic Highlanders" whose every activity is forced into the struggle for existence—remarkable for their exceptionally cheerful dispositions in spite of the rigor of climate and hardships of life? Self-control. Self-control is a matter of individual education. All want happiness; then let each live in such a way as to develop and daily strengthen his self-control. He must conform to the law that brings it. As the Buddha said:

"Since it is impossible to escape the result of our deeds, let us practice good works."

Let us conduct the soul processes of our lives with as much care as we would put into the building of a house or the making of a bridge. Happiness—a psychical reality governed by law—cannot proceed from weakness, but does unfailingly follow soul strength. As inevitably as a burning coal emits heat, the individual who makes the required conditions creates happiness.

"Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore, God, even thy God, hath annointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."[2]

Jesus said, "Sin no more lest a worse thing come upon thee."

Within all the activities of the soul and Spirit there is intimately woven law and order. In the psychical realm as well as in the physical there is no such thing as luck—it all follows law. The Buddha said to his disciples:

*"Like every thing else in nature the life of man is subject to the law of cause and effect. The present reaps what the past has sown, and the future is the product of the present."*

[2] Hebrews 1:9

## VI

# INTELLIGENCE IN NATURE

IN Hartwood, New York, there is a tract of land apparently complete in its desolation. Acres of trees have been cut at different angles to fall across a central area; all of them have been denuded of their bark. There is left a field of stumps. Branches have been interwoven with dirt and other material into mounds—one of which is twelve feet high. A natural dam, extending half way across a stream, has been solidly completed. If the visitor stands quietly and watches, he will observe a little nose, and two guarding eyes peering out from one of the mounds to see if the stranger has departed from his gate. It is a veritable city of beavers in which generations of these little animals have performed a herculean task—a work that would require strong, intelligent woodsmen and instructed engineers. This city planning, wood-felling, and dam building! Whence the intelligence? As the water in a sponge permeates every pore, so Intelligence permeates the animal kingdom. It expresses itself thru the psychic entity of the animal.

The search for Intelligence in Nature once begun, we find it—everywhere.

One morning at an old country homestead, as I stood by the pump outside the shed door, I noticed on the pump handle a piece of grey lichen. It was that crinkled, paper-like sort with small reddish flower-shaped centers. It had been years since I had seen that kind. I associated it with our summer country home of childhood. Suddenly, the thought came, "How did it get there? It was not there

yesterday." As I looked, gradually, the almost rectangular shape resolved itself into a compactly huddled-together tree-toad representing a splash of vegetation. I examined it closely even to the humpy red flower centers—and I marvelled! The biologist would call it " the instinct of preservation." Naming a phenomenon does not explain it. Here was more than an instinct; it was evidence of a discriminating intelligence. The toad was in danger of molestation. The ever present Intelligence immanent in all nature, expressed Itself in the selection of the protecting lichen. The necessary chemical changes in the material of the toad were set in motion. The psychical entity of the toad and its physical atoms were vehicles for the expression of an Intelligence beyond that of its own.

I have seen a tree-toad of a beautiful cinnamon brown color resting upon the cinnamon brown pine needles on the floor of the forest. I have admired one of a soft pine-needle green perched upon the green needles of a pine tree. And again, on of the complex color of a tree trunk to which its little palpitating body clung.

And the last—the most astounding—a little up-to-date fellow perched on our cement bungalow simulating cement! He matched the grey perfectly—and the rough surface! He had copied its general aspect. It was the first cement wall in the woods thereabouts; my little toad had no instinct thru heredity. Who could deny the presence of Intelligence there?

Some years ago the water of Lake Sebago encroached upon the bank and began undermining the vegetation there. A Norway pine slipped down the slope with its roots embedded in a mass of earth and lay bent horizontally. The roots clung to the soil and the tree lived on. But a tree rears itself upwards to get air and light; this was impossible for a prostrate tree. Thereupon the Intelligence—

indwelling in the pine—selected a side limb growing upward toward the sky to serve as a main trunk. At present the limb is the main trunk and it measures many more inches in diameter than the original one.

A sunflower turns its face to the sun; the climbing vine reaches out and grows in the direction of the pole which it requires for support. Ants build themselves into a bridge over which their colony may pass. In Cuba, I saw across my path a procession of particles of leaves—each particle about one-quarter of an inch square. I stooped and found the bearers were ants. My niece informs me that these are the leaf cutting ants. They do not eat these leaves; they eat a certain sort of fungi. The leaves provide a suitable material upon which the fungi grows. If this is not an expression of Intelligence, what is it? Nor is this evidence of Intelligence limited in its expression to the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

Every mineral in its pure state forms a crystal—a crystal whose shape is peculiar to itself and by which it may be recognized. It is as characteristic as your own countenance. Dainty star-like snow crystals—produced in the upper atmosphere from water vapor—can be unmistakably identified. Quartz—the mineral that with mica and feldspar make up the stone granite—looks, in its pure form, like glass. An amethyst is violet-blue colored quartz. Its crystals may always be recognized by its slender six-sided form terminating in a point at the apex of six angles. Always—no matter what the color—a quartz crystal may be recognized by this characteristic shape.

Sulfur heated in a small glass tube becomes a vapor, cools, and is deposited on the sides of the tube in tiny crystals. Each of the minute sulfur crystals formed has the same individual characteristics.

And, moreover, each part of the crystal bears a like mathematical relationship to its lines and angles. Often crystals are recognized by these very relations that the sides and angles of each bear to the other. They are governed by law—mathematical law.

It is interesting to leave in the laboratory at night a large white basin full of a clear liquid—a blue copper sulfate solution. By the next morning the most beautiful garden of blue crystals will have formed—and you have a flash of insight into the wonders of the mathematical Creation of Intelligence!

The most spectacular proof of the mathematical basis of all physical matter is shown in the Periodic Law.

All physical matter is made up of elements—as has been said. Mendelejeff arranged these elements—in general—on a chart beginning with the lightest, hydrogen, and ending with the heaviest, uranium.

He placed the first seven along a horizontal row, the second seven under the first seven, the third under the second, and so proceeded. When he had finished, he found all the elements in any one vertical row related to each other. They possessed characteristics in common—in either an ascending or descending degree. If he added the weight of two alternate elements in the column, and divided by two to get the average, he found the approximate weight of the element between them.

Because there was too wide a discrepancy between the weights of some of the elements, he left spaces and foretold the existence of other elements not yet found which belonged there. Many have since been discovered and the spaces filled; there are yet some spaces to be occupied, and consequently some elements to be discovered.

The Periodic Law underlies all the operations of

the physical world which we perceive with the physical senses; it governs and is eternally coexistent with every atom of matter in the created universe. The tiny atom in each element with its individual rate of vibration discloses the presence of Intelligence in nature. The Periodic Law shows the basis of physical existence—the basis of matter—to be founded on Number. Mathematics, number ratios, necessitate the exercise of a high order of Intelligence—an Intelligence revealing not only Law and Order, but One that fundamentally employs motion and number in Its activities.

And the working of this Universal Intelligence—this One Mind—reveals Itself in all kingdoms of creation and introduces identical types on more than one plane: The branches of a tree are repeated in plan and form in the horns of a stag. The shape and tracings of the sea-shell are reproduced in the fungi that grow on decaying stumps. The identical color and fashioning belong to the insect as well as to the twig of the tree; it is difficult to distinguish which is insect and which is twig. Another insect looks like a dried yellow autumn leaf, and he has legs of the same color and material. Vegetation issues from the damp soil which resembles coral formation produced by " zoöphytes."

We probe deeper and deeper into the physical realm only to find beyond it—always—some intelligent scheme unexplainable on the physical plane. All vegetable and animal organisms are built up from protoplasm—protoplasm which Professor Huxley calls " the basis of life." An "individuated mass of protoplasm—generally of microscopic size—with a nucleus and a wall, constitutes a cell." All organisms from the simplest plant to the human body are made up of cells. In the process of living, the protoplasmic material of the cell wears away, and is repaired, wears away again, and is renewed.

How is it renewed? By material absorbed or eaten. Thru a process of digestion and assimilation, the food is converted into the elements and compounds necessary to the life of the cell.

Think of it! The physical cell starts out with—possesses this miraculous power! This fact is enough in itself to disclose Intelligence in nature. But this is not all. Read the list of functions with which under proper conditions a cell is endowed—sensation, nutrition, automatic or spontaneous motion, and reproduction. When physical science starts out with this basic form of life, the cell already contains possibilities transcending the highest human intelligence! *What else but a Supreme Intelligence prepared the protoplasm for its evolutionary career? What else but a Supreme Intelligence conceived and created a physical universe of mathematical harmonies?*

Behind this incessant, mathematical exercise of vibratory movement, back of the endowments of protoplasmic cells is Universal Intelligence. What we perceive with our material senses is the form, but within the form is some degree of consciousness. Thru form appears Universal Intelligence expressing Itself as Life sustaining the universe and all that is contained therein.

" For the invisible things," said St. Paul, " of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, *being understood by the things that are made.*"[3]

And, as said in Eastern Scripture, " *I established the universe with one portion of Myself and I remain.*"

[3] I Romans 1:20

## VII

## SPIRIT AND MATTER

A MAN said this to me recently:

"Just think! A materialist believes evolution to be only an outcome of the blind and blundering struggles, and necessities of existence."

Why did the amoeba—the simple mass of protoplasm—develop into anything more complex than an amoeba—if the end was mere existence? But always there were intelligent adaptations of the means at hand to clearly specific ends. This would have been impossible unless planned by Conscious Intelligence.

The Intelligence which acts thru the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms is immanent within them, for Universal Intelligence pervades the universe and functions thru form. Intelligence is one aspect of God—Spirit—and so are Motion, Life, and Love.

Things of the Spirit transcend human reason and are spiritually discerned. *It is not possible to discover spiritual truths thru intellectual gymnastics. If one longs for the truth, he must turn not to speculative philosophies but to the Bibles of the world; and to the words of those who have personally experienced the realities of Spirit.*

God is the Origin of all. He "substands all phenomena" and whatever exists now existed potentially in God before creation—in God as Divine Essence or *Primal Substance.*

When creation occurred, Primal Substance changed from a state of rest to a state of activity. And Primal Substance in a state of activity is matter. There we have it! When motion ceases—

matter ceases and becomes Primal Substance again.

This accounts for the assertion made by certain Eastern philosophers: "There is no such thing as matter." Blavatsky reports, "Everything is illusion outside of eternal truth which has neither form nor color nor limitation." And in our Western world, Plotinus writes, "External objects present us only with appearances. Our question lies with the ideal reality that exists behind appearances." Tennyson said, "The spiritual *is* the real, the eternal; it belongs to me more than hand or foot."

Matter is not the solid objective reality that it appears to be; nevertheless—as I said before—matter is a reality at this stage, on this plane. God created *something*. As St. John said, "*All things* were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."[4] "*All things!*" The visible heaven and earth, the physical matter of air, water, and earth—rocks, minerals, vegetation, bodies, animal and human! "These things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."[5] And all things made are incessantly active. "From the microscopic molecule to the planet, everything revolves, impelled by one force, and obeying one law."[6]

This statement was received by one spiritually enlightened. It tallies with the latest authoritative statements in chemistry: "But nowadays the atom has become a regular solar system. Nothing is capable of explaining its properties discovered in recent years, short of removing from it all the simplicity it was supposed to have, and adding to it such new complexities as only incomprehensible celestial systems possess."[7]

Spirit evidences Itself alike in the atom and the

[4] Saint John 1:3
[5] Hebrews 11:3
[6] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*
[7] W. R. Whitney in *The Littlest Things in Chemistry* (A Chandler Lecture, 1920)

planets—both were originally Primal Substance unmanifest. We find in the masterly introduction to Balzac's "Louis Lambert," ". . . Primal Substance, modifications of which include the so-called immaterialities, as well as the materialities of the universe. Matter and Spirit are simply different states of the same entity, and the latter is the highest refinement of that which finds its grossest embodiment in dimensional matter."[8]

Mr. Parsons says further, "The theory of a homogeneous substance is much older than the Grecian civilization—older than the science of the Chaldean and Babylonian Magi. We must look for the genesis of that theory in the cradle of the Aryan race, and we shall find it established there in remote ages—prior, probably, to the Vedantic period. The homogeneous substance of the nineteenth century was known to the Aryan sages as *Akasa,* and they appear to have speculated upon it with an acumen and a thoroness leaving little opportunity for the superposition of original views."

When I first studied chemistry, the text books said that a physical element—lead, for example—could not be changed into any other element, that it was an individual, fixed finality. "It now seems very sure and quite acceptable that uranium, thorium, radium and actinium are shooting out negative electrons and positively charged ions *and changing accordingly into elements of lower complexity.*"[9] This leads us to expect a common origin of all the elements. Now add to that "the atoms of all elements are made up of negative electrons, and positive charges which may be atoms of positive electrons similar to negative electrons but smaller."[10] We thus face the following amazing statement:

[8] Charles Frederic Parsons

[9] W. R. Whitney in *The Littlest Things in Chemistry* (A Chandler Lecture, 1920)

[10] Hildebrand in *Principles of Chemistry,* page 281

"We are therefore led to the conclusion that an electron is not a particle of matter plus an electric charge, but *is* simply an electric charge—*an atom of electricity.* And since, as we shall see, the atoms are made of electrons, it would appear probable that *matter is composed solely of electricity.*"[11]

There is a theory now being considered which puts a different interpretation on the constitution of ether. If this should prove the truth, matter would be reduced to aggregate *particles of ether carrying charges of electricity.*

In either case—well may one delight in God's law and in the wonders of His creation!

"God is Spirit, God is Mind. God is the subject and object of mind; at once the thought, the thinker, and that which is thought of. God is positive and personal Being; the potential essence of all that is or can be; the One and only Self that alone in the universe has the right to say 'I'. Wherever a presence is, there is God; and where God is not, is no being."[12]

God is Universal Power, the Source of all power manifested in whatever way, in whatever form. He is Universal Life, Wisdom, Intelligence, Love. God—Perfect Justice, Mercy, Harmony, Truth, Will. Who is All-That-There-Is-That-Is-Good; wherever evidenced, however expressed, it has its root in Him. Everywhere is Universal Spirit—in everything—permeating the universe with His holy Presence.

Matter is the condition of Primal Substance furthest removed from its Pure Being—externalized as crystals from a liquid solution. It is the plastic material that Spirit fashions into forms, and the forms are vivified by Spirit. Life—which is Spirit—uses matter thru which to express Itself; form exists because of the Life principle within. Each form

[11] Hildebrand in *Principles of Chemistry*, page 281
[12] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

provides a temporary expression of Spirit whose activities within are limited by the degree of refinement and evolution of material comprising the organism. When life departs, the form disintegrates; it is no longer permeated with the Essence that is the reason for its being. The mission of the form is fulfilled; its individual round is completed; under the law, it is disintegrated. And lo! the material is prepared for further use, for transformation into new forms of beauty and wonder—again a vehicle for spiritual revealment. The departed Life enters into new combinations of matter. And as all cognizable existence—all nature—is said to be dual, so here—Life and Form; Spirit and Matter.

# VIII

## SPIRIT INDIVIDUATED

WE must know something of what we are in order to find out why we are here—we who are limitations of the Divine.

" Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things; whate'er you may believe
There is an inmost center in us all."[13]

God who is Spirit created out of Himself, but still within Himself, new centers of Intelligent Spirit, Egos. Each Ego was destined to build itself into an individual, to grow—by means of involution and evolution—in the world of matter, to accumulate experiences whereby to evolve further. Each Ego is a fragment of Divine Spirit, an Individual Intelligence—a new starting point for the activities of intelligence. But this intelligence issues from its own self, is under its own rule, follows its own initiative, and determines its own progress or retrogression. In each fragment lies latent the potentialities of the Whole—for God is homogeneous. In each is this inmost center—the complex higher nature of the spiritual man.

It has been the general conviction of mankind since the beginning of time that there exists within himself an individual spiritual entity—Marcus Aurelius says " The Deity in me."

St. Paul refers to the whole man as a three-fold being—*Spirit, soul,* and *body*—not a distinct separation like three steps in a short flight, but closely interblended and interwoven. " And the very God of peace sanctify you *wholly:* and I pray God that

[13] Browning

your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless.''[14]

That which Paul calls the '' Spirit '' in man, Jesus simplifies by saying, '' The Father in you''.

'' I and my Father are one.''[15]

'' Believe that the Father is in me and I in Him.''[16]

'' At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me and I in you.''[17]

Fundamentally, the Ego is Spirit, a divine Spark, invisible, impalpable, immaterial, and a reality in the spiritual realm. It is the individual eternal. '' Force, force, everywhere; we ourselves a mysterious force in the center of that.'' Latent within is contained all there is of God that can be embraced within that individualized part of the Divine Whole. As rapidly as the man—undergoing the process of evolution—makes the proper conditions, the Divinity at his center unfolds and manifests itself in his consciousness as power, wisdom, and creative activity showing as will, pure intellect, and love.

'' We are all originally descended from God,'' said Epictetus. And again, '' You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a certain part of Him in yourself.''

Although an entity, the individual can never exist out of God. The center of Spirit, which is the nucleus of the human being, is one drop of water in that Ocean—God, All—Spirit. In God '' we live and move and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, ' For we are also His offspring '.''[18]

In that they are offspring of God, all human beings are equal—like parts of a Whole—but in different stages of progress. No one part of the whole can

[14] I Thessalonians 5 :23
[15] Saint John 10 :30
[16] Saint John 10 :38
[17] Saint John 14 :20
[18] Acts 17 :28

injure himself without blemish to the Whole; none improve himself without parallel elevation. "All that is in God as universal subsists also in God as individual. Wherefore man is nothing that God is not. And what man is, that God is likewise. God withholds nothing of God from man. For God is love, and love hath nothing of her own."[19]

And not only in man but "In every creature, in forest, in leaf and tree, and bird and beast and man, there moves a spirit other than its mortal own. Pure, fluid, as air—intense as fire."[20]

In the Spirit of man is included the sum of all the constructive growth attained in his history as a set-off individuated portion of God since the beginning of creation. Nothing which is not of God can co-ordinate with the Spirit at man's center. The Spirit in man is the Monitor that breaks its silence in the voice of conscience and, as an outsider, observes the soul's living. From a higher vantage ground, the Spiritual Ego comments on action or inaction, self-control or its absence, and upon the failure or success vital to the progress of the Individuated Spirit Itself. It inspires and goads to activity. And when the human being fulfills his part—since the law of Cause and effect governs the Spiritual realm—the Spirit empties Its riches into the conscious soul.

[19] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*
[20] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

## IX

# THE SOUL

THE soul in man is said to be the Spirit working in grosser matter. In its limited aspect, it is the *you* that you know, the conscious part of you, that of which you are aware as yourself. It includes the intellect, is that which thinks, is conscious of thinking, and knows what is going on. The soul uses the mind, but is not the mind. It feels physical pain and pleasure. It experiences emotions—anger, dread, jealousy, and egotism; it enjoys tranquility, faith. In fact, the soul experiences emotions, but is not the emotions. It is within the soul that the will is exercised—instigated by the Inward Being. The will sets in motion the machinery of the body bringing about movements to carry out its bidding. It is within the soul that the will is exerted, but the soul is not the will. As Emerson expresses it, " All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs: is not a function, like the power of memory, or calculation, of comparison—but uses these as hands and feet."

As a soul, then, each is conscious of living in a physical world which serves as a background for the exercise of his higher facilities—for the play of desires, emotions, the intellect, and morals. But there is something more. That part of us which is conscious is only on the surface of an inner soul world where the Higher Being reigns. For, within each Ego, there shines forth its own Divine Center—that radiant Light—a flame from the " pure and naked fire of God burning in infinitude."

" Spirit is essential and perfect in itself, having

neither beginning nor end. Soul is secondary and perfected, being begotten of Spirit. Spirit is the first principle, and is abstract. Soul is the derivative, and is therefore concrete."[21] Then this follows: the evolution of souls is a bringing forth of individuals from centralized Spirit. "Spirit on the celestial plane is the parent of the soul."[22]

The soul—like the two faced Janus—faces two ways: as it looks out—externally, it is the earthly soul; as it looks inwardly, it is the divine soul. The earthly soul of a human being is its lower aspect because its concerns, its cares, and memories are related to earth. It is the animal man. When St. Paul said "Ye are not spiritual; ye are carnal," what did he mean? He meant that the search for content and happiness is in the world of external things. The activities of the earthly soul lead to sin and sorrow. But the suffering forces a recognition of right and wrong, evolves a capacity for sympathy and compassion, and strengthens mind and character. As the understanding expands, one functions more and more thru the divine soul and makes a contact between the mortal and spiritual. The divine soul relates itself to the aspirations and ideals and their translation into daily living; it is the divine man. Together the divine soul and man's Spirit comprise the eternal Higher Self.

[21] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*
[22] Annie Besant in *The Changing World*

# X

## THE PHYSICAL BODY

YOU cannot make music without an instrument. The musician needs some device thru which to express his individuality. The Ego, too, needs an instrument made of the same material as that of the physical world—one capable of receiving the vibrations issuing from physical matter. This it has. The physical body is a receiver. It is sensitive to material vibrations and brings them to the attention of the soul within which they are interpreted as color, form, sound, smell, taste, pressure, and temperature.

The physical body serves as a bond of connection between the Ego and the physical world. The Ego exercises its bodily senses; it develops its faculties and powers; it comes to know itself and other selves; it recognizes the presence of Intelligence in nature; it ascends to a conception of moral values and of spiritual realities.

It is evident that thruout all the processes of physical evolution, Nature's goal was to create a physical body sufficiently complex to answer the needs of a conscious soul.

" Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"[23] The human body—that matchless machine of ours! Have you ever thought of its wonders? Thru the ages, thru eons of time, spiritual forces throbbing within the physical universe evolved the human body —the apex of physical creation.

[23] I Corinthians 3:16

"Out of the night and nothingness a Body appears

The threads of a thousand past ages run together in it."[24]

The physical body includes within its organization and constitution all the principles and forces of mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms combined. In the bones, blood, muscles, nerves, and flesh is the same union of atoms and the same cohesion that is at work in minerals. In the aggregation of atoms into cells, of cells into widely varied human organs, in their growth, are the same forces and principles that are at work in plants. The resemblance between corn silk and human hair is an example. In complexity of organism, the power of locomotion, in sensation, instinct, and volition, the same laws are at work and the same principles involved as in the animal kingdom. "Animals appeared first on earth, not as is vainly supposed, to minister to man's physical wants, but as an essential preliminary to humanity itself. On no other hypothesis is their existence intelligible for the long ages which elapsed before the appearance of man."[25] Above and beyond all contributions, the human body thru the evolution of these kingdoms has itself gradually evolved into a more suitable habitation for the progressing soul of a self-conscious, reasoning being reflecting the Spiritual Ego within.

Any person's body is an expression of his soul. Of their close connection John Ruskin has said, "I do not mean to speak of the body and soul as separable. The man is made up of both: they are to be raised and glorified together, and all art is an expression of one, by and thru the other."

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[24] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

[25] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

Walt Whitman wrote:

" Was somebody asking to see the soul?
See your own shape and countenance—persons—substances."

To see the material manifestation of a person is to see one particular phase of the soul. Spinoza—the founder of modern philosophy—teaches that the mind and the body are the same thing differing only in aspects. The physical body is a material showing of the immaterial. It may be thought of as a solid crystallized out of solution—a crystallized condition of the soul.

And on this body—thruout physical life—and in it is expressed all the ventures of the soul. This physical instrument is a cathedral whose walls may become desecrated by rough and unholy use. " The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."[28] And that temple shall be treated with respect; for every desecration the owner pays. " If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy."

[28] I Corinthians 3:17

## XI

# THE SOUL'S RELATIONSHIP TO SPIRIT AND THE PHYSICAL BODY

THE soul of man, on the one hand, is directly connected with its own material manifestation —the physical body. On the other hand, thru his own fragment of divine Spirit, it is in direct communication with the Universal Spirit of which he is a part.

What can anyone expect, then, who searches for God exclusively in the external world? The outer is not the realm where the connection between God and the human soul exists. The knowledge of laws and principles underlying physical science may inspire to the inner search for knowledge of The Creator. The profound Intelligence disclosed in the scheme of evolution or the beauty of the material world may incite to spiritual research. But the quest suggested or augmented by the discovery of God's sure presence in nature is not in the external world—*the soul's conscious union with Spirit is an inner experience to be sought within.* The materialist focuses his attention on the outer plane; he disregards the intimations of the Spirit and fails to recognize the higher realities in store for him interiorly. For all alike who conform to the ways of the Eternal Will, the Spirit expresses Itself thru the conscious soul of the human being.

At this moment the main business of our life is on the plane of consciousness with a double work to perform, at opposite poles—inward toward Spirit, outward toward the physical world. The soul observes the external world with the physical senses which

constitute its contact with material manifestations; herein lie endless obligations.

The search of the soul for the establishment of a conscious relation between itself and its Maker is fruitless if sought elsewhere than within. The road to the perception of the Inner Presence begins in the soul and proceeds thru its God-unit—which is one with God—to God.

"Every man is a channel thru which heaven floweth," and, as said Emerson, who understood things of Spirit, "We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to all the attributes of God." This is the direction of true evolution. Wherein a people fail, they look without to matter—to the outer shell. Their search should be in the opposite direction—within, to the nucleus—Spirit.

## XII

## THE SOUL'S FREEDOM

BOTH man and animal are endowed with consciousness. Consciousness is One. Wherever expressed it is of the same Original Whole—within animal form or human form. In the animal consciousness—in the process of individualization—it is limited in its expression by the form thru which it is manifesting itself. In the animal kingdom the degree of consciousness observed varies within a wide margin. The amoeba, it appears, is aware only of the need of food; it is conscious of nothing further than this necessity. An intelligent dog, at the other extreme, is aware of objects outside himself—his is an individuated consciousness. He is conscious of anger, fear, enmity, friendship, and of love and devotion. In the human kindgom, too, the progressive stages of consciousness are observed. There are island tribes very low in the scale of evolution whose idea of number, for instance, is vague and confused and whose general comprehension, as compared with that of advanced races, is feeble. As primitive as they are, yet in relation to the most sagacious animal they are far in the lead—for they are self-conscious. The power of being aware of self is peculiar to the human being. Between the most highly developed animal and even primitive man there is a profound gulf—man's richer endowments making him a superior creature.

When man has prepared himself, there are unbounded realities of which he may become aware. *The limitation is in one's degree of consciousness, not in the existence of things which might be known*

*were one developed sufficiently to perceive them.* The human family, in general, has not yet approached the climax. Dr. Richard Bucke—in "Cosmic Consciousness," shows conclusively that in every generation there are men towering above the average individual as to their state of direct perception of spiritual things, even as the ordinary man towers above the most intelligent animal. Many members of the human race are in the process even now of flowering into a new state of consciousness, its characteristics being as startling as are those peculiar to self-consciousness when compared to the simple consciousness of the animal. Above and beyond the simple consciousness of the highest type of animal is that of the average man; towering above that, in turn, stretching onward, upward, outward, is that of the superman; further on, wider and wider extension—till man reaches Divinity.

As a human being, then, one is equipped with both simple and self-consciousness, and with the latent possibility of an extension of consciousness to come.

In each kingdom of nature there is a clear intimation of the intent in the next higher; the intelligence shown in rare instances when dogs seem to reason predicts the reason that is exclusively human. At the same time there is but a faint shadow of relationship between so-called animal reason and the clear cut reason of man in the region of higher mathematics and of abstract philosophy. A human being has desires and the power of choice—so has the animal. The man, however, has the power of independent choice, that of selection among his desires, with reason forming his judgment. And again, wherein the animal has instinct, the man has intuition. At every point he has outstripped the animal. Man's choice can be directed upon any line of action. He has what the sages of all times have valued as the basis of man's force—the power of

conscious will. He can consciously will to this act or that. He can put forth the initial impulse of will necessary to start a particular activity and he can exercise the power of sustained will to keep the activities in process till he has accomplished his end.

It is this comparison between animal and men that accentuates the soul's freedom. A being conscious of himself, aware of others, aware of his physical and psychical existence is either free or not free; if he is not free he is compelled to action by some force other than self. This is, indeed, the situation in which an hypnotic subject finds himself—subjected to the will force of some one outside himself. This, too, is said to be the condition of a medium—also an hypnotic subject—hypnotized by an invisible rather than a visible individual. Nor is a man who is drunk or drugged free. For he is subjected probably not to an outside invisible intelligence, which is sometimes true, but to physical brain disturbances caused by physical poison. It is the man himself who slipped into the habit; he was free to have avoided that. Habits in themselves become forces of such strength as to require an enormous exertion of will with a steady sustaining persistence to overcome them. Then it is amazing what can be done—what is done! Often a human derelict reached by sympathetic appeal—because of a flash of inspiration lighting for a second his conscious soul—chooses to pull himself back to constructive living. Tho stimulated by inner spiritual light, the vital decision and effort must be exerted by himself. Emanating from self is the will to do; his is the exertion of will-power. His resurrection is dependent upon and due primarily to his own initial and sustained will.

We have only to compare the man in his right senses to one we know bereft of his power of will to see that under normal conditions he is free to

choose—free as the winged bird in the sky. Independent of any other intelligence, he may choose, he may weigh the pros and cons. He is at liberty to use his reason. Once his decision is made, independent of any other intelligence, it is his own impulse brought into being by his own will that translates itself into action. Once the initial impulse is exerted, his actions are due to his own free, sustained will-power. And woe to its misuse! The will power improperly placed makes a man more vicious than an untamed animal; nobly exercised it effects his approach to Divinity.

## XIII

# THE SOUL'S RESPONSIBILITY

CHILDREN of the same parents, brought up in the identical home, attending the same school, vary in their characters often quite as much as children in separate homes. Observe this in your own family. While surroundings influence your desires and decisions and may incite to action oftentimes, some thought, some vision determines you to set your will in opposition to every other suggestion. In the last analysis it is not the environment that settles what you elect to do or not to do.

So long as you are in free possession of yourself, no one can *make* you do anything. You can elect the right, or you can elect the wrong. It is true that you do act continually as a result of your previous choosings, but that is as you will. You are a reasonable soul and intend to be a good citizen; you prefer to behave according to your best judgment. Consequently, the credit of being a self-controlled person who conducts himself with wisdom is justly yours. As you are a human being free to do as you wish, you are responsible for what you do. It follows that you are responsible for the train of events your acts bring into existence. Every time, my friend, that you say a careless word that hurts, every time that you say a kind word that cheers and encourages, you induce conditions resulting in a chain of circumstances for which you are responsible.

When night comes, if you review your day's living, you must face your mistakes, your lapses, your sins. In every case, who but you is responsible for them? No one. Others may suggest, may even override

you, but nevertheless the decision was yours. If in that decision you sacrifice your pleasure for the comfort and welfare of another, effects from that cause gravitate toward you with scientific precision. The act was yours and nothing can stay the upbuilding beneficial results that automatically flow from the action. Good deeds or bad, good thoughts or bad—recall that they are yours, and upon your soul are heaped the consequences of their reactions.

"As the crowning achievement of evolutionary development, Nature has invested you a man, with certain distinctive and exclusive attributes and characteristics which distinguish you from the animal. These are self-consciousness, reason, independent choice, and independent, self-conscious and rational volition. Upon these . . . you must depend for all that enables you to rise above the level of animal nature . . . for all that makes you a responsible individual intelligence—for all that gives you a moral status among your fellow men, and upon these and these alone you must depend for your ability to achieve individual immortality."[27]

[27] TK in *The Great Psychological Crime*

## XIV

# THE SOUL'S RECORD

EVERY normal human being is himself responsible for what he chooses to think, speak, and do—the time comes when he is judged thereby. Man is a focus of the cosmic force. Therefore, insofar—by the use of his faculties, powers, and ever increasing possibilities—he fails to coöperate with the Whole, he disturbs equilibrium and obstructs progress.

A man appears at the end of the month to read the amount of gas consumed as indicated by the gas meter; another man reads from the watt-meter the quantity of electricity used. The weight of pressure of the atmosphere is registered on the barometer, the speed of the wind on an anemometer. Botanists register the rate of growth of plants; psychologists register emotions. If our lives are to be judged, the memory of the days must somehow be preserved. There would seem to be necessary some sort of automatic registration, some record of the vibrations we continuously produce in the day's living.

Occasionally, quite unexpectedly, there spring into our minds memories of long-forgotten events recalled in minute detail. They have been hidden we know not where; but there they were, stored way in some superconscious region. It has been said that all vibrations are registered " in the memory of nature " to which we have more or less access according to the degree of faculty developed. However accurate this may be, the study of abnormal psychology—in the French schools especially, in their experiments with hypnotized subjects—has dis-

closed the undisputed fact that buried deep in the recesses of man's being lies his access to a perfect memory.

During hypnosis, patients report facts that they were not conscious of observing in the past, but which were known to have been true. They tell of objects seen from the corner of the eyes while their attention was focused elsewhere. When the superconscious memory is reached, it produces the effect of removing blinders from the conscious recollection.

Each morning, many of us enter upon the activities of the day—careless—not realizing that every second we are setting in motion subtile vibrations. These are too fine to be registered upon even the most highly vibrating physical material. Nevertheless, all that happens to us—even our fleeting thoughts are registered and preserved in some higher plane of existence. Nature unrolls a moving picture film that records the day's living down to the utmost detail.

But in this moving picture are reproduced not only this daily life, but deeper and more subtle vibrations. Not only our actual life reproduced there, but our thoughts, our hopes, our emotions—all registered as accurately as the human voice in a perfect Victrola disk. This is the soul's record.

## XV

## SOUL GROWTH

IN hundreds of thousands of years the human race has grown along all lines: the physical body has evolved into a more highly organized machine, the mind has grown less confused—has increased in general capacity—and the moral and spiritual natures have unfolded.

When primitive man struck a rock with his fist, it was his fist suffered harm, not the rock. Thru experience, he learned the nature of the external world, his relation to it, and what was expedient or inexpedient for him to do or not to do. Nature had so arranged this plane of existence as to push him into a search for knowledge; his comfort, his pleasure, his well-being, his very existence depended upon his knowing. If he wanted food, he had to search and labor for it. If he wanted comfort, he had to cease cursing the rain and cold as an exclusive exercise and get to work to build himself and family a shelter. Nature never rearranged her laws to suit his whims or convenience; consequently he was forced to study her laws and conform his actions to them.

To learn the facts of nature, he had to develop his powers of observation; he had to deduct from these facts the principles that underlie them. He was forced to develop his reasoning faculty; this led to discoveries and invention. It is by virtue of these that he has attained intellectual growth. Men have sharpened the knives of their intellects upon the whetstone of the physical universe. To do their work, they have harnessed water, steam, gas, alcohol, gasoline, and electricity. They have created steam, cable, and electric railroads. They have laid high-

ways, constructed dams, erected huge bridges, and spanned chasms. They have produced delicate and leviathan machinery. They have delved into the mysteries of the constitution of matter of which the whole physical universe is composed. They have searched for Nature's laws, apprehended her principles, developed new plants, new flowers, new fruits, made out the habits of insects, birds and animals. They have conquered the ocean and air. They have built a Panama Canal!

If men had not developed the power of accurate observation, if they had not assembled a systematic body of facts about this wondrous physical universe into sciences, if they had not thought and pondered and reasoned upon the relationships of the facts of the universe to each other, and to man, and to the Supreme Being—the whole social structure would have remained at a standstill. We would have had no scientists, no philosophers, no religious specialists. The growth of the man thru the ages has brought us a Raphael and a Titian—interpreters of divine beauty. It has given us a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Balzac, a Browning, and a Walt Whitman—august men—possessed of intuitional insight into the truths beyond ordinary perception. It has produced Pythagoras, Sophocles, Epictetus, and Plato—honored leaders of thought—inspirational teachers—philosophers—who, in all generations, have raised souls out of the mire of materialism. Also, age-long efforts have crystallized in an Emerson and an Edward Carpenter—spiritual specialists—disclosers of spiritual realities—men who have been and are an inspiration and benediction to mankind.

And on the forward march of civilization one fact stands out clearly before us all—a scheme of evolution, an intelligent plan toward growth, progress; it discloses a process of unfolding in all departments of nature.

This process of unfolding is true of the whole human being—body, soul, and Spirit. In the life of the child is repeated the gradations of the evolution of the race. The gamut of what has been passed thru by the human family in uncounted time is run over in the years of a child's existence. In a few hours, it may be said, a little one catches up with what it took the savage hundreds of years to evolve. Simple consciousness is said to occur in an infant a few days after birth, self-consciousness on an average of about three years. The human moral nature is often late in appearing; it was late in its relative appearance in the race.

As it was experience that taught primitive man, so it continues to-day. A child tugs at the tablecloth and when everything unexpectedly crashes to the floor, he is frightened and cries aloud. Because of this, he acquires knowledge which contributes to his growth. And it happens to a small boy that after he sees his father throw a stick of wood into the fireplace, he toddles after him and throws in his daddy's gold-headed cane. The moment the child learns that canes should not be used for fuel, he enters upon a moral obligation, and upon his voluntary response to his moral obligations rests the growth of his soul.

All our conscious life goes on within our souls. The soul's activities—expressed thru our physical bodies on the physical plane—are intellectual, moral, and spiritual. The plan for soul growth on all planes is scientific. Its progress is based upon unchangeable facts—upon a law that cannot be escaped. It is the law of Cause and Effect.

The law of Cause and Effect deals with actual things on the soul plane; invariably, the same effect unrolls from an identical cause. Soul growth no more follows upon the infringement of the law than flying is accomplished in an imperfectly constructed

machine. In foot-ball the rules may be changed at will—the game was created by man, regulated by him, and is subject to his decisions. This is not true in physical and psychical nature wherein God's laws are fixed. They cannot be changed at our discretion; we must therefore conform to them or be broken by them.

Impregnate a cheese with a special, beneficent germ, and its life processes produce the required delicious flavor. It must be done under pure, cleanly conditions following the rule that will bring about the one desired result and no other. A house cannot be built without conforming to law. We build up the soul by following out a certain line of procedure as inflexible as any other law. It is not along the way of inaccuracies of observation, of confused thought. It is, however, along the path of accurate, sharply defined observation, a crystal clear mind, and a masterly use of reason. And reason tells, and results show us that the upbuilding of the soul is never along the way of depression, unrest, unhappiness—all surely reflected in physical ills—an automatic result of not conforming to the law of Growth. All constructive evolution is along the road of goodness, peace, cheer, optimism, happiness, and faith.

Some one says, "I don't agree with you. I don't believe it. Look at the success achieved by the wicked, and recall how many good people are sick and poor."

The life of every human being is complex. It is the result of intricate causes, some of which did not occur in this particular animate existence upon earth. It is not here in the present that the complete harvest is gathered; the end is not yet. Yes, success is achieved by the wicked. They may be rich, so may the good—quite true! *The measure of life's success, however, cannot be rated in terms of material possessions. The growth of the soul is not*

*estimated in coin.* Indeed, riches supply enormous temptations. They hinder initiative and creative power; they often engender false estimates of the true values of the permanent and impermanent. Some possessors of wealth regard it with the pride of an acquired virtue. It often gives rise to arrogance, blotting out brotherly love, and creating a conviction that one must be considered before others. It is the cause of incessant occupation and preoccupation with the pleasures entirely of the physical plane. It is not the riches that is the sin, but the manner of their quest, and the time-absorbing distractions from the real in life—the intellectual, moral, and spiritual. This is what Paul wrote to Timothy:

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."[28]

We all know owners of material wealth who are not owned by it, who use it for the good of their fellow men, who understand it as a means of greater opportunity, and, who, as stewards of God, put it to use wherever they believe it will do the greatest good.

It is true, too, that many good people are sick. Sometimes the gentlest and sweetest women live thru long periods of illness. However, there is some cause back of it. Somehow, somewhere, there has been a broken law. It is not necessarily a transgressed law of physical health on the physical plane, but more likely some broken psychical law which reflects its effects upon the physical body. She has been

[28] I Timothy 6:17—19

troubled or grieved or worried; she has no comprehension of psychical laws, and unfortunately has to pay the penalty of breaking them. She has sorrowed, perhaps, and Nature demands—in its progressive march of triumph over self—faith in its final beneficence.

It should be remembered that rich or poor, sick or well, experiences come as lessons to the soul as they are needed. The physical plane is the growing ground for souls so that just living along we naturally grow thereby. As Peter wrote in a letter: "Lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocracies, and envies, and evil speakings . . . *that ye may grow thereby.*"[29] When we once learn that soul growth is a serious part of the real business of life, we shall be less casual. Growing is not accomplished by fixing the attention upon the things of the outer world to the exclusion of the inner. One's behavior and pursuits in the outer life need to reflect and be influenced by the glowing inner Spirit. Soul growth takes place as the developing individuality advances, and it is incumbent upon everyone to look inward to perfect the end in view. It is our business to find how far we have come on the road all are destined to travel. It is our business to prepare for a fresh start, going forward with strong, steady strides, and covering greater distances.

Every human being produces the causes that determine his own set of experiences, and his character is the outcome of how he meets them. The rate and quality of the soul's growth is determined by the rate and quality of man's physical, mental, moral, and spiritual activities. He is the individual who builds and must build his own character to an even higher altitude; his object should be to raise himself to the purity and perfection of Spirit.

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[29] I Peter 2:1

The law of soul growth lies along what has been called "the straight and narrow way." Straight and narrow as it may be, it is the only path that leads to the goal of life. It is the only one that can be trod with permanent content. It is the only one that can give lasting satisfaction and happiness. It is the one alone—even at the present time—that can give to the traveller "the peace that passeth understanding."

## XVI

# COÖPERATION WITH GOD'S PLAN FOR THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN BEING

WE are here—living, conscious, responsible beings. We look about. We observe parents straining every nerve to feed, clothe, shelter, and educate their children—who grow up, who find mates, who rear another family. They, in turn, bend their backs to the bringing up of a new set of offspring, who grow up, who find mates, who have children, and these in adult life continue the process.

What does it all mean?

That it is simply a weary round of bringing forth generations to replenish the earth is absurd! Such a conclusion insults the Intelligence expressed thru all nature—the process includes something of deeper significance.

I recently visited in Cuba a factory in which raw sugar is made from sugar-cane. The mammoth lifting machines raised, at a time, one-half a carload of sugar-cane to the trolleys, and they carried it over to immense rollers where the cane was crushed. In great tanks the extracted watery sugar syrup was purified. In large boilers most of the water was evaporated. In vats the sugar was crystallized out of the thick syrup—molasses. In centrifugal machines—or "whizzers"—"raw sugar" as it is known in the market, was separated from the molasses. Every piece of apparatus in the vast system of machinery is there for one specific purpose—that of fulfilling its own individual responsibility as

a part of the one great plan—to make raw sugar from sugar-cane.

What do we observe in human life? The perpetually bringing forth of generations—one after another, never ceasing. That is the machinery of life. Man's surroundings, his conditions, serve as machinery for the growth of souls. And the work to be done thru its use is definitely defined. The machinery exists to carry out God's purpose—" His increasing purpose."

> " Yet I doubt not thru the ages one
> increasing purpose runs
> And the thoughts of men are widened
> with the process of the suns."[80]

*There is a purpose! There is a plan!*

The Ego is resident within the physical body, living on the physical plane for a purpose. The realities of existence are not limited to the material—the material, a realm planned to give scope to the soul's activities. And these activities of mind and character come as rigidly under law as matter.

A law underlies the unfolding of the rose bud into full flower; we recognize that. A worm within its fold prevents its perfect development; we know that. Cruelty, weakness of any description in the moral fibre mar the beauty and harmonious development of the soul. That is equally the law. Nature's law on psychical and spiritual heights is uncompromising and clearly points the way to God's plan for the evolution of His human family.

The race evolves only thru the advance of the individual. Without your assistance the world cannot progress. You—even you—have the power to hold back for a moment the Divine Plan for human evolution. Your duty is a double one—to yourself

[80] Tennyson

and to the other members of society. Your first responsibility is to build up the one human being for whom you are responsible—yourself. You are the only human being who can keep your body in tune for its higher duties, who can discharge your intellectual, moral, and spiritual obligations. If you are to coöperate with God's plan—if you are to use your time, your thoughts, your efforts to fulfill His purpose for you, you will offer all that you are, dedicate your life, consecrate your soul to the achievements of His will.

Coöperation with God's Plan for His human family requires the use of all the faculties and powers with which man is endowed above the animal. Each human being is a necessary unit—since the progress of the race is built up from the growth of the individual man, woman, and child.

*Coöperation is man's part! The Plan is God's.*

If we could but understand! What the All-Wise wants for us is actually what we want for ourselves. If we but knew! If we could but comprehend how small the price. We are lured into by-paths, thinking we see greater ease and easier pleasures by a shorter and less difficult route. And we find what we took for ease—stagnation or insidious retrogression; what we took for pleasure—bitterness. Man may voluntarily give his love or he may withhold it. A freely given love is the only kind conceivably valued by our Divine Father. If we refuse, we cut ourselves off from the rewards and suffer from broken law. And in the end we are forced to return to the main way. There is but one way—the road upon which we conform to the Law of Growth.

"The highest product, man, is the result of the spirit working intelligently within. But man attains his highest, and becomes perfect only thru his own voluntary coöperation with the Spirit."[31]

[31] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

All this book contains up to now leads to one question. We may well shut ourselves away in the silence of the closet to pray for guidance, for upon our answer rests our future—our happiness—our well-being. Upon our answer rests the degree of our growth and of our evolution as human beings.

*Shall we or shall we not voluntarily coöperate with God for the evolution of the human race?*

# XVII

# COÖPERATION IN PRESERVING PHYSICAL HEALTH

## Physical Laws of Bodily Health

THE physical body is "the holy temple of God." The more perfect its condition the better is the soul's chance to fulfill its duties and obligations, and to enjoy its rewards. No individual Ego can so well express itself thru a defective as thru a normally healthy instrument. If there are physical or psychical means whereby we may induce and sustain conditions of health and maintain the physical body at its highest point of perfection, it is our duty to inform ourselves and apply them. Judged by results, it is nature's intention for us to observe all laws that govern the health of the body. They are consistent with the Divine Plan with which we must cooperate.

A doctor I know, tells his patients that they dig their graves with their teeth. Otherwise moral persons are immoral eaters; they eat too often and too much at a sitting. Many could cut in halves the quantity consumed and be better citizens. Too much food makes a man spiritually heavy, inattentive, and interferes with his efficiency in work. People drink stimulants when their nerves are already overstimulated and eat sweets when they are too fat and in no condition to assimilate an additional amount. They eat to enjoy the pleasures of the palate after the body has reached the limit of its need and they live to reap the harvest of excess. It takes more courage and strength of character for

most persons to deny themselves savory food and stimulating drink than to tell the truth. Self-indulgence is easy but damaging; self-control difficult but upbuilding.

Anyone who moves his muscles seldom, or sits all day at his job, cannot expect to remain limber unless—with daily regularity—he walks, or takes five or more minutes for strenuous exercise. Those occupied in sedentary labor should make the most of every change of position, stoop from the waist to pick up a paper, walk across the floor with elasticity and uplifted muscles, throw out the chest and hold up the head. I know a woman who stands on one foot while she puts her shoe on other; the process of dressing and undressing provides varied opportunity for limbering up the body.

There came to us as girls at home a dressmaker who sat bolt upright at her work; her chest and back were perfectly carried. In the early days of her business, she was once shocked to see herself in a mirror bent over into an unsightly huddle. Sewing was to be her life work and she determined to learn to sew sitting erect. She did. Her fine appearance was entirely due to her own effort and strength of character. She ceased making herself a host for tuberculosis germs. Habit is a valuable friend when used for and not against us.

Fresh air in the lungs is an important factor in health, and yet many refuse it when they could have it; all who will may get sufficient oxygen into the system to supply its imperative need. Women who stay at home all day should open the door or window often and let in the fresh air. Or several times a day should put on a wrap and step out of doors where they can take ten breaths of fresh air, slowly inhaling and exhaling. Even those in crowded workshops can refresh the physical body with the out-of-doors oxygenated air by breathing deeply

when they do get outside. At least eight out of the twenty-four hours—the hours of sleep—can be spent —except in the most extreme weather—as nearly as possible in the outside air. I have a sister who sleeps out of doors the year round; in winter she wears a cotton flannel garment, lies between cotton flannel sheets, and puts a flannel blanket under the mattress to keep out the cold. The comfortable is spread under an outside cover to retain the heat. In a cold climate within the room one may have windows all open to full capacity if the bed is arranged as described. The physical system needs oxygen, must have oxygen. This is a simple and effective way to get it in adequate quantities.

An excessive amount of sleep—over nine for an adult in good health—is simply a habit, and tends to make him fat and slothful. And yet, there is a wide latitude in the way vitality holds out. It is a pity that every one who has lost his first freshness by noon cannot lie flat on his back for ten minutes in perfect mental and physical relaxation. It is especially important for people of nervous temperament, or for quick, alert workers to take a halt for repose —all nature has her periods of rest for renewal of forces. She expends hers more evenly than man who should voluntarily and intelligently give time for her recuperative ministrations. It pays anyone —the more work to be done the better it pays—to stop, relax, and rest.

### Power of Thought Over the Physical Body

Is the physical body affected by other than physical causes?

If so, to what extent?

What action other than physical may be taken to improve one's health, to check or remove weakness, to prevent illness or disease?

For years, Dr. Dubois of Berne, Switzerland, was sought by patients and by other doctors from all over the continent of Europe. One day a woman came to him after a long journey for relief from an increasingly troublesome malady. The odor of flowers invariably made her faint. Everywhere she went, if she were near flowers she swooned—she was forced to become a recluse. At the second call, as she stepped forward to meet Dr. Dubois, she saw behind him an immense bouquet on the table beyond. She could scarcely believe her eyes! But yes, it was true! She gave him a reproachful glance and crumpled up in a swoon. When she had recovered, the physician said to her, ' Madam, you must come here and smell these flowers.'' Incredible! She couldn't; she wouldn't. She demurred; it would make her faint again. He insisted that he could cure her only after his own method. She braced herself for the ordeal, leaned over and smelled the flowers—they were artificial!

Always her thought had been powerful enough to interrupt momentarily the normal flow of blood thru her heart; then she had fainted. He could never have convinced her by telling her that she needed psychical reeducation.

The following is in a physiology I once studied:

'' A butcher was brought into a druggist's from the market place opposite, laboring under a terrible accident. The man, on trying to hook up a heavy piece of meat above his head, slipped, and the sharp hook penetrated his arm so that he himself was suspended. On being examined, he was pale, almost pulseless, and expressed himself as suffering acute agony. The arm could not be moved without causing excessive pain; and in cutting off the sleeve he often cried out; yet, when the arm was exposed, it was found quite uninjured, the hook only having traversed the sleeve of the coat.''

And the following is the doctor's observation:

*" The sensation here was perfectly real, but originated in the change in the brain and nerves, instead of the external senses."*

The sensation, the pain, was actual—not imaginary, we note. It was, however, a thought of great vitality—not lacerated flesh—that caused the excessive excitation of the nerves and brain. So-called " imaginary invalids " do not imagine that they are ill. They are ill. Their thoughts are forceful enough to give them real indigestion, real head-aches. The cause of their illness is in the realm of thought and emotion—not in the physical realm. It is a physical disability caused by their continuous thought habit. To change their state of health—in coöperation with the Great Plan—they must alter their habit of thought.

## Cells

The human body, we recall, is composed of cells—tiny forms. A cell is a cavity with cellular walls which separate it from other cells. These cell units together compose the bodily organs—as the heart, lungs, nerves, and glands. We have bone-cells, cartilege-cells, muscle-cells, and fat-cells. In fact, even the skin is an organ made up of cells. Cell substance differs in each kind of cell; each has its duty to discharge, its special function to perform. Because it is endowed with the functions of sensation, nutrition, and reproduction, it can run its own affairs. It is a little organ by itself and yet it unites with others to compose the structure of all the bodily organs, as, for example, the organ of sight. In all these cells many modern authorities hold that there is a low type of consciousness—cell consciousness.

As an individual, you are endowed with the sense

of touch, and when you touch anything, you have a sensation; when a cell comes in contact with an object outside itself, the cell is said to experience a sensation of a low order. It resembles human sensation, perhaps, as the shadow of a superb flower is related to the blossom itself. It is supposed to be the suggestion of a sensation.

Sensation is of the utmost importance for cells are short lived; if the cells of which an organ is composed die, the organ ceases to function. They "feel" and respond to the presence of nutritive material brought to them in the plasma of the blood. Among the millions of cells that go to make up the physical body, each—endowed with the function of nutrition—each one, takes its food from the blood supplied to it as the blood circulates thru the system. It does not take up that which it does not need, but takes the special sort of nutritive material that it requires to rebuild and renew its particular cellular tissue.

Two substances unite to make a new substance unlike either of them, as before said, and a chemical change takes place. If oxygen and hydrogen gases are placed together in the right proportion and under the proper conditions, they unite to form water—wholly unlike oxygen or hydrogen. In the cell the material taken from blood is changed chemically into those substances it needs for nutrition and reproduction. By virtue of this function of reproduction, then, the cell reproduces itself—and this process is going on continually.

### The Cells in Their Relation to Physical and Psychical Causes

Health is vitally important to your happiness. Would it not be wonderful if you could send out orders to your cells and meet with instant response?

Do your thoughts in any degree influence your cells? Is there any way to find out if the army of cells that have the power to renew the physical body can be reached? Are they in any degree affected by thought?

You look at the sun till the tears come to your eyes. A violent wind, rubbing the eyes, or the effect of onion juice will make your tears flow. These constitute physical causes that affect the lachrymal glands—organs placed above the eyes that secrete tears. All these things on the physical plane affect the physical glands and cause tears to flow in excess of their normal action.

But these glands can be affected in exactly the same way by a cause that is not physical. News comes to you of the fatal illness of some one you love. He may not live. You think of the loss and the thought is followed by an emotion of sorrow—and the tears flow in excess of their normal action. This was a psychical cause which equally with the physical cause reached and acted upon an organ of the physical body.

Once only I addressed a large audience. Within ten minutes of the start, my attention for a quick moment was forced to my tongue which was as dry as the leaves blowing about in the autumnal wind. The normal flow of the salivary glands had stopped, caused by an unrealized lack of confidence—a form of fear. Thus the action of a physical organ was clearly a case of emotion affecting physical cells.

The mere *thought* of food has a similar effect upon the salivary glands as the physical act of mastication.

In the spring of 1911 my sister and I were awakened after midnight by a telephone message. Our young nephew nineteen years old, away at school—with all his life before him—had died of pneumonia. We were both stricken with a swift,

active nausea. This psychical cause—grief—reached the physical organ—the stomach—with an almost instantaneous response. The motion of a boat, or a dose of emetic—physical matter—have precisely the same effect upon this organ of digestion as has a thought of sufficient strength to bring about an emotion.

Psychical as well as physical causes affect the cells of the skin. In sudden fright—a purely physical cause—the three miles of perspiratory glands break out in a "cold sweat."

In the mental state of modesty, confusion or shame—one blushes. What has happened? The sympathetic nerves are excited and cause the capillary vessels of the skin to dilate with an unusual amount of blood.

And so we might continue, for *every single organ of the physical body is affected quite similarly by two utterly diverse causes—the physical and the psychical—by material means and by thoughts and emotions.* The result on the physical body is the same in each case—the cells of the organs are reached and influenced to action.

Here you see the truth—law—law! And here is a supreme law: Your thoughts do reach and influence your cells. Every human being, every Ego, *may consider himself potentially the supreme master of his own universe of cells.*

## The Ego—The Supreme Governor

"The brain is the central seat of government," it has been said. It is the seat not the governor who occupies the seat.

The grey matter of the spinal cord is like a subsidiary center where the less important parts of the government are located. This is true of the various ganglia of brain-like substance located thruout the

body. Wherever there is grey matter like that of the brain, there seems to be mind and some form of subconsciousness. The grey matter serves as the instrument of the mind. Unconscious as we are of these subsidiary minds—or local officials—each is invested with authority over special functions of the body, and controls a special area from its subordinate post. Fortunately, the work of these organs governed by lower nerve centers is carried on unconsciously and leaves man's attention free for higher occupation. The local authorities run their affairs leaving the governor at liberty to handle the bigger questions.

The nerves are the highways that connect the subsidiary centers, or local governments, with the central government—the brain, and carry messages between them. The Intelligence—the governor—at this central seat leaves the internal workings of the territory to the director of the subordinate post as long as all goes well. If it goes ill the governor exerts his influence to the most distant part. Even every cell of the skin " has its own separate connections with the center of the nervous system which unite there just as telegraf wires unite at a terminus."

So it is that every cell connected directly or indirectly thru the nervous system to the brain may send up its message, and the governor interprets it in his own terms. Certain cells need water. Up comes the message to the governor—in the case of the individual, the Ego—who says, " I feel thirsty." Other cells need material to repair waste. " I feel hungry," interprets the Ego. There is a reciprocal relation between the Ego and its cells.

Every message must start from the brain and the directing Ego must use the brain to impress its desires on the cells—these messages take the form of thoughts and emotions. We have already seen

the effect of thoughts of worry, fear, and hatred, which are involuntary, unconsciously-sent-out messages to the cells of the body—bad messages creating havoc in the cells. We know their effects to be disastrous! What, then, is there to hinder the voluntary, consciously-sent-out messages for the intentional purpose of producing good results on the cells? It is possible for the Ego to impress thoughts on the brain and to create harmonious activity and normal functioning of organs. Not only does intense grief produce a destructive influence on the cells of the body, but intense joy exerts on them a constructive effect for good. Emotion vitalizes the thought. A revengeful state of mind lowers the tone of the cells; forgiveness reacts in warmth and glow. Uncontrolled sorrow, disappointment, and depression inevitably produce destructive results; hope, joyousness, and laughter bring about constructive effects. Thoughts of whatever nature act upon the physical body. They travel that highway of the nerves from the brain to the bodily cells—each carrying its assigned effect—good or bad. Think of it! You send those messages out. You have the power to send the good or bad. Your unconscious influence is daily exerted on your system. You are the Governor. You are the supreme ruler of your state. Your responsibility which you owe to yourself is as vital as that which the governor owes to the state.

## Psychical Cures

Cure by psychical effort is not as easy as the act of walking; were it so, it would be more generally understood and used. We are consequently more familiar with the external world perceived with the senses than with the complexities of the psychical. Everything worth doing requires attention, time,

and effort, and learning to develop and to use one's psychical powers is no exception. Indeed, Nature makes it a part of the scheme of life to force us to the use of our psychical powers. If we dodge this responsibility, to that extent, we are opposing God's plan. In the realm beyond the physical, each human being is an original experimenter. If he keeps his perceptive faculties alert, uses his power of observation accurately, holds his judgment open and unbiased, and then reports with scientific exactness—he is a contributor to the world's knowledge.

From the beginning of history, psychical cures have been recorded. There have been men in every century who recognized the power of the soul—which includes far more than the mind alone—over the body. There have been miracle and faith cures as well as mind cures. There are authentic cures of pilgrims at sacred shrines; the great heaps of discarded crutches represent many permanent restorations to health. Such is the power of faith! There are Christian Science cures, the cures of the Spiritualists, cures from the laying on of hands.

Before I knew anything concerning these realities, I went to hear Schlater preach; he proved to be a man of very limited education. He believed himself to be ordained of God to heal the sick; and he was said to have done it. He was strictly honest and sincere and never accepted money for his services. When I heard him in the opera house in Geneva, New York, not a soul accepted his invitation to come to the platform to be cured of any ill. His method was to grasp the hand of the patient and form a link for the healing power of God. A few years later I read an anecdote about him in "Mind Power and Privileges." Mr. Olsen writes that he knew a man and wife who were among thousands one day receiving Schlater's hand-shake and benediction. They were both at the time wearing glasses. The

next day on the train the wife complained that her glasses appeared strange; she removed them and found that she could see perfectly, and she never needed them again. The identical experience happened to the husband.

Plotinus cured Porphyrinus, a friend who lay desperately ill in Sicily, thru the creative power of wonder working words—the utterance of which create potent vibrations.

All psychic cures are based on law. The simplest, the most direct, and the key-note of all is—FAITH. In truth, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick . . . Pray for one another that ye may be healed . . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." It is difficult to attain to faith, but it can be developed in the soul by affirmation, suggestion, and prayer.

> O Source of All Life! Teach me to cultivate my powers. Strengthen me in the use of them. Help me to set in motion those forces which re-create and govern in health the cells of my physical body. Bend my efforts to keep in well-being this body—the instrument of my soul and Spirit—that I may be Thy worthy agent. Immerse my body in the shining light of Thy Presence that physical ill may melt away even as the dew in the shining sun. Amen!

### The Right Attitude of Mind

You want health, do you not? You want to use your psychical powers to further it? Then there is a health attitude of mind to cultivate and to maintain. Whatever mars it is to be shunned. *Surely—at some time—if one concentrates his mind on the details of disease, they will be out-pictured on the body.* Men who were born strong and healthy have thru their attitude of mind acquired invalidism;

others who were weak have become strong. The initial necessity is to realize that we are potential masters of our universe of cells—a physical realm over which we should be supreme governor. Within each soul lies the possibility of perfect physical soundness and of readjustment from inharmonious conditions. As a room is flooded with sunshine, so should the mind be overflowing with all-pervading thoughts of health. As the air of a country road is filled with the sweetness of honeysuckle hedging its borders, so should the whole soul be impregnated with the atmosphere of physical well-being.

### Physical Causes and Cures

Cells respond to causes having their initial impulse in the soul, but we must never forget that the physical causes are there and must be reckoned with. A knife cuts the flesh; swallowed bread undergoes a chemical change. When we combine an acid and an alkali in our system, they react; a change takes place, and we have neither an acid nor an alkali but a neutral salt and water. If the stomach is over acid—it should be somewhat acid to digest food properly—a carefully judged amount of a selected alkali, like baking-powder, neutralizes the troublesome agent present. This leaves a harmless neutral salt, and the over acidity ceases to exist for that time. But—and this is the important point—the cause has not been reached; that must be eliminated or the condition will recur.

There are medicines—such as baking soda, phenacetin, or castor oil—that exercise a definite action and have a precise effect upon the human organs—such is digitalis used for the heart. There are many medicines of little value without the aid of the psychical effect produced by suggestion. With the medicine must go faith in the remedy. Even tho

it be one that is inert—even bread pills—the power of the mind is such, that the conviction of its curative power acts as a command to the cells. Medicine is a most powerful agent of psychical suggestion and whenever taken should be accompanied by a belief in its efficacy. When I look over the work of the world, I am impressed by the importance of the beneficent role played by an intelligent, able physician consecrated to his calling. Daily he goes his round—from house to house—advising, administering, relieving from pain and trouble, carrying hope and cheer. He renders service second to none!

Personally, in serious cases, I believe in working on all three planes, the spiritual, the psychical, and physical, to bring about cure. Providence has placed us on a material earth and provided us with material bodies that require material food to nourish them. Therefore, God works on the material plane as well as on the spiritual. Why should we not do the same? Whatever our trust in God, we minister to our own physical needs. We choose food; how could selected medicine interfere with the action of Spirit any more than selected food? Medicine is given to aid the normal activities of the system. Nevertheless, as years go on, we are working away from medicine. Much less is given than formerly, and more advice as to diet, hygiene, and self-control. *It is increasingly recognized that physical ill is usually the outcome of psychical causes, and should be treated from the region of cause.*

However, mental and spiritual healers, it is claimed, are unsuccessful in curing the sick who depend upon medicine and spiritual treatment simultaneously. It has been found that the relation of Spirit to matter is as yet so little recognized that for most people to take medicine during spiritual treatment is an act of fear and not an additional act of faith. But certainly there is no question of

the relative value of the power of Spirit in the soul of man. And we find with Edward Carpenter:

> "Lo! the healing power descending from within, calming the confused mind, spreading peace among the quivering nerves."

And so it should be our purpose to arouse this healing power. It exists, and, if we create the necessary conditions within, we can bring it into activity. In our study of external nature we find within and beyond matter—spiritual causes. The human body, affected by spiritual causes, reflects the psychical state of the owner. The cells can be educated to respond to soul forces.

### Coöperation Includes the Use of the Soul's Forces in Self-Cure

Affirmation and suggestion are simply forms of educating the cells to do your bidding. The command given in Joel: "Let the weak say, 'I am strong,'" is an order given by the Ego by way of the brain to the proper local authorities. They should be informed of what is wanted of them. Vigorous, persistent suggestion that health is a reality is a means of re-educating the cells to normal action. But, of course, if the cause of the disturbance is a sin or a fault, then mere affirmation of health should not and would not cure! A "cross-patch" must mend his ways; an habitual worrier must change his habit of thought; a gourmand must eat with greater moderation. Everyone should aim to have a philosophical outlook and to make self-control a part of his natural expression.

Some of us are particularly susceptible to what others think and say of our condition and are made ill by their suggestions. A better type is found in Ephesians: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs." Speaking at the moment of waking in the morning, or before you have emerged from the inner state of mind to the perception of the objective world, or affirming in the restful attitude before sleep—these find you in a fruitful psychological mood. It is then easy to focus the attention and concentrate the mind on what you wish to accomplish.

Emotion is a soul force to be controlled with as much intelligence and care as the power generated in an automobile. A valuable asset, it should not be wasted. Fortunately, casual thoughts and ordinary psychical impressions do not reach the physical cells with the swiftness and power of those charged with terrific emotion—if they did there would be a continuous state of cellular upheaval. Emotions cause a wide gamut of ills from headaches, rheumatism, spasms, apoplectic strokes, and paralysis to death. The emotion-producing thoughts that create fear influence the physical cells perniciously—that we know. Do we also know from personal experience that the same emotion instantly diverted may be made to produce a salutary effect upon the body? This is a fact: Arrest an emotion—like fear—catch it, transform it, harness it, and it becomes a power for good. By the power of the will the thought that aroused the feeling may be switched to a line of focused soul work. And that completed the human part is done. One must relax into a state of restful confidence—and Nature does the rest. The emotion of sympathy may be transmuted into an effort to cure.

A steam engine is liable to jump the track when deprived of the directing hand of the engineer. A man's cells in illness are animated with life needing the directing will of the owner; the life forces are subject to his concentrated will and may be controlled. As Dr. Anna Kingsley said: "Every cell

of the human body is polarized in the human will." All life manifested in the human organism is God's life flowing thru from the Central Spirit into man's domain *and is subject to his direction.* The time will come in the evolution of the race when we will have learned to use our directed concentrated will to renew vitality and to maintain perfect health. But to accomplish it, man must pay the price in effort to bring into subjection the eternal life energies resident within the body.

### Understanding Faith

There is a method of spiritual cure wholly different—based on faith and spiritual understanding. Many whose thought-habits do not admit this are benefited thru the exercise of their wills, emotions, and the power of their affirmations. All soul effort along these lines increases one's degree of force and prepares for the incoming of the healing power. And in many it has led up to an understanding faith.

Understanding faith proceeds from a realization of our oneness with the Divine within—of which we are a part. We must know that our spirit is of God—that there is no barrier between our own inner consciousness and God-consciousness. We must remember that the form is subservient to Spirit—reflects Spirit the Source of all Life and Being. The Christian Scientist proceeds more directly and denies matter. In thought one must enter into the realm of the absolute and affirm what we potentially are—what we spiritually are—Perfect in Health. We must attain to the proper spiritual mood—one of living trust, of active expectancy, of calmly letting go and knowing that the supply of healing forces flows into our being abundantly. "Stand still and see the salvation of God which He will work for you."

There are many books on this subject for those who want to learn. "Healing Currents," by Walter De Voe, is full of helpful suggestion. It is possible to turn on these currents for one's self or for others, but it is the responsibility of the person cured to maintain himself in health. Slipping back into habits of destructive thoughts again sets in motion causes that upset normal functioning. We must keep in mind that we are temples of the living God and that the eternal Being dwells in us. After we have done our part, as Miss Cady says in her "Lessons in Truth," "Rest in peace, saying: 'God is my strength, God is my power, God is my assured victory. I will trust in Him, and *He will bring it to pass.*'"

## Minor Ailments

Having done your persistent best to create within your thought-life an atmosphere of serene health, then ignore and forget minor ailments—*the most speedy method of recovery.*

Your shoulder aches. Nature left to herself, governed by law, is engaged in correcting the trouble. But you keep your attention focused on the ill! The managing Ego sends the message of ill along the wires to the cells accentuating the condition; the cells instead of getting an impulse to tone up, receive an impulse to remain as they are.

Insomnia creates a panic of anxious worry over the miserable day sure to follow a sleepless night. Altho desirable, it is not necessary to sleep the night thru to gain enough vitality to tide one over the next day. It is even possible while retaining consciousness to get abundant rest—if one exerts his will to be calm. It is the restlessness, the anxiety, the thrashing about, exerting influence on the cells that cause the dire effects. And it is well known that

one lying quiet—without anxiety—is far more likely to sleep. There is no danger in the loss of an occasional night's sleep; it should not be treated as a calamity, nor talked about enough to imprint it on the mind. The more one talks about being a poor sleeper, the deeper he drills the conviction into himself and impresses upon his brain the very thoughts that invite sleeplessness—he educates himself into the habit of insomnia. A poor sleeper has only to recall the astonishing freshness and accumulation of energy acquired in even five minutes' slumber. He may have lain down in the afternoon quite fatigued, slept twenty minutes, and gained renewed vitality that kept him comfortably supplied till the evening bed hour. The concentration of the attention upon any ill is an added impulse of the soul's forces; it aggravates the condition.

When I was a girl, we were to rehearse at my home for private theatricals. At the appointed hour the men who came from a distance arrived; the rehearsal could not be postponed altho I had had a sick headache all day and was still ill. I staggered down stairs, took a deep breath, entered the room, and greeted my guests. When I began my first lines, I clutched my throat to prevent nausea. Of necessity I had to keep my mind focused on the Howells play we were giving. It was two hours later when I suddenly thought of myself; I realized my own existence for the first time since I began—I was perfectly cured! I could scarcely believe it; it seemed a miracle!

In general, light ailments are treated too seriously. The repetition of one's symptoms to friend after friend impresses the condition upon the brain, nerves, and cells and deters Nature's curative activities. The attention riveted on the pain as pain never alleviates; fixed elsewhere it may do so.

### Resignation a Deterrent to Recovery

The patient herself has a role to play in her recovery more important than that of the doctor. She must hold in mind the inevitable response of bodily cells to thought. She must desire health ardently in an atmosphere of confidence, with positive conviction!

"If a desire to get well could cure me," said a woman saturated with the belief in the inescapable thralldom of physical ill, 'I should have been well years ago."

You cannot walk upstairs unless you use your muscles. It needs more than a desire to get well; it needs a passion to get well—it is a passion to get well, combined with the exercise of the psychical nature that counts. There must be hope, buoyancy of spirit united in a determined will to be well; a never-giving-up determination to be well. It is a re-education of the thought life. The soul forces are not at the call of weakness, inertia, or inefficiency. It requires the making of vivid pictures, the building of air castles—anything constructive—anything except depression and a deadly resignation in which the soul's powers lie dormant. In this passive state the patient opens himself to influences of any sort from any quarter. Whether the soul exerts conscious effort or not, whether one understands the psychical laws at work or not—every moment of living one is building for health or ill. The incessant activity of the thought life affects a corresponding response in the life of the cells included in the organs of the physical body. And thus it is that "*The tongue of the wise is health.*"[32]

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[32] Proverbs 12:18

## Perpetual Cell Response in Daily Living. An Illustration

The day begins. John Doe fails to find his newspaper on the veranda; he shows annoyance by calling to Mrs. Doe: "Why isn't my paper here?" His mild form of anger transmits itself to his cells—an inevitable result. The more violent the emotion, the greater are its effects on the physical body.

Unjustly brought to account, Mrs. Doe answers with a sense of injury: "Why do you hold me responsible?" Her cells lose tone. Cases have been known of exaggerated self-pity leading to melancholia.

Martha brings in the toast and departs. Under the aftermath of his irritability, Mr. Doe remarks: "Can't you get her to toast bread without drying it to a crisp?" Another destructive impulse travels to his cells.

Mrs. Doe's lips tighten.

"Here is a piece that will suit you." She speaks coldly and makes no attempt to pass it off lightly, nor to control her slight feeling of resentment. Resentment has an adverse effect on the physical cells, but neither is giving thought to effects. The psychical law, however, underlying the influence upon cells of thought and emotion, works on.

At this juncture both husband and wife—who are almost invariably affable—metaphorically shake themselves and begin again; but the atmosphere is still clouded. Even the effects of a slight loss of self-control are not cleared away on the instant. No health giving impulses are being sent to their cells.

She walks out across the veranda with him as usual to the steps. As she kisses him good-bye, she looks him directly in the eyes and their glances meet. She smiles; he smiles sheepishly. Their cells are getting tone.

" Have a fine day, John," and she feels a thrill of affection as she regards her splendid husband. Ah! That starts a glow of healthful influence. As he walks up the street more at peace than since his first outbreak, he inhales deeply the freshness of the morning air. That is a physical cause that invigorates his cells. And he admits to himself that he was a little disagreeable about the paper and toast.

" Mary is a trump! I am fortunate! I'll not be a boor again." That is fine for his organism!

He jumps on a car, miscalculates, and in recovering himself knocks sharply the bundle from his neighbor's arm. He swoops down to pick it up; the other man makes a simultaneous swoop; their heads meet—a thud! A fervent ejaculation escapes from Mr. Doe and another bad impression passes to his cells. But his neighbor, having a keen sense of humor, bursts out laughing; everybody laughs contagiously; John Doe laughs. A good natured conversation starts among the men, and soon John Doe radiates content and his cells all reflect his buoyancy.

Later in the morning, it occurs to Mr. Doe to try " Instant Postum " for breakfast; his coffee is not agreeing with him. Of course not! But he has never heard of the influence of thought and emotion on his bodily cells. It has not come home to him that he might find self-control in little matters as good for his digestion as a coffee substitute.

Ordinarily before she turns into the house, Mrs. Doe takes in the beauty of the morning which has both a physical and spiritual effect upon her. She is not as sparkling as usual this morning and hastens in to tell Martha about the toast before she forgets. Had she looked first, she would have postponed her mission for it was apparent that Martha had her own troubles. Altho she told her sensibly and kindly how they preferred their toast, the maid burst into

tears; she needed sleep; her nerves were unstrung. Mrs. Doe seized her by the hands. Whatever was the matter?

Her young man—it was his ring she had been wearing on her finger last night—had danced with a new girl all the evening and had let her come home by herself.

This was real trouble! Even here Nature urges to control, and the lack of it—however extenuating the cause—has a deleterious effect upon the physical system—generally attacking it in its weaker spots. Happily there is compensation. Altho trouble and a weak will act detrimentally on the body, courage and strength of character bring about constructive results.

And so the days go by, and all the Mr. and Mrs. Does and the Marthas are affecting their bodies for better or for worse. Inexorable, unchanging law! Yet the law points the way, and man's only method of conquering is to know the law and conform to its findings.

The clock ticks its seconds; and each soul in every thought, word, and in every act, whether of self-indulgence or of self-control, stores up for itself its own physical future. We hear the cry: "It is not just that grief over my cruel loss should react on my health!" But that is exactly what does happen. It is the law; it must be just. By this means—thru self-control and self-forgetfulness in sorrow—the human family are impelled to growth thru service to others. If it is our will not to control, Nature forces us to the controlling. It is our office to coöperate in the progressively unfolding plan for human evolution.

## XVIII

# COÖPERATION IN INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

THE same Intelligence that manifests Itself in nature—manifests Itself in us—but in us it is individualized. And in us and by us it must be unfolded. The effort expended in the preservation of health is only a beginning of coöperation; our immediate aim also is to advance in intellectual growth—to develop our faculties and mental powers. The great Increasing Purpose reveals no conceivable limit to the future of mind capacity. As the consciousness widens, later, will come perception, transcending thought and reason as they exist on this plane, but there is much to accomplish before we arrive at that stage.

Our present concern is to cultivate alert attention, and close and accurate observation—knowledge is an absolute necessity. If we would be alive to what is going on about us, we must train our minds to consecutive and sharply outlined thinking, we must make comparisons, use our discrimination and our judgment. If we wish to comprehend, if we wish to see below the surface, there is no other way than to develop our minds—that is sure! Otherwise, how can we possibly make intelligent choice of action?

The knowledge we have often determines what we elect to do; we cannot live up to the highest standards of morality—in spite of the best intentions—in ignorance of facts and in the absence of understanding. You are kind; you wish to please your neighbor's child; she eats an enormous pickle—your gift—and becomes ill. You advise a friend to put

a cupful of kerosene on the wood to hurry up the fire; it results in her hasty departure for the next world. Thru ignorance you become the author of unintended misfortune. Never is an ignoramus god-like! A good or moral man with an uncultivated mind will be narrow in his judgment and his opinion will be valuable in a limited sense only. How could one who does not know the facts act with intelligence?

"But it is hard work to cultivate the mind!" Yes, it is hard work to cultivate anything—peas, violets. One step forward at a time—that is all that is needed! Read for five minutes and think about what you have read for ten minutes every day—every day because that sort of habit does wonders for the cultivation of mental power. And then do get into the habit of doing your own thinking, of doing your own reasoning, and of trusting to your own conclusions. *You are connected with the same universal reservoir as the most brilliant man!* It is better to be occasionally mistaken in making your own uninfluenced decisions than to depend upon others.

We should study our mental selves and correct our weaknesses. Is it a poor memory? That can be helped. We can focus the mind and concentrate on what we wish to remember, putting as much vitality into it as into our favorite pastime; but we must take an interest in the accomplishment. There is no kind of laziness so prevalent as mental laziness. People shrink from mental exertion as from heavy blows. If they come to a difficult passage in reading, unconcerned—they skip it! A few passages further on they come to another hard one—it is promptly omitted and they read on. But to get the true meaning of the whole, they must get that of the vaulted pages. "Oh, well—that is too much like work!" They read it thru, but they never know the book.

You, who left school after the grammar grade, you who left after the high, you, after college, you a post-graduate—how conscientious have you been each day to increase your mental capacity—trying to conquer something a little harder than you can do easily? One great need in the world today is brains. Are you helping? Are you doing your share? We need you; we need the result of your independent thought.

"What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"[33]

What is more useless than an unused gift? An unexercised mind is like a rusty hinge; it creaks. Each of us is provided with a mind and it is our duty to use it. Each has received faculties and powers and an endowment of innate possibilities. Why? To use in order to wax strong mentally. The aim is not to accumulate facts, for, unused, they encumber the mind; they are hoarded furniture collecting dust; the aim is intellectual strength. To expand in capacity of thought and understanding and to increase in wisdom we should make use of the material gathered and we should *think,* THINK! We should combine and analyze and systematize using our reason.

We serve the rising generation by offering them a college education. Our object is to have them increase their intellectual powers, to strengthen their mental acumen, and to advance in the evolution of their minds. The majority of our young men and women during college years do a fair amount of first hand thinking; often I have been amazed at their originality in creative thought. When they are launched upon the world, what happens? They slump mentally! And yet a short time each day given to hard study and original thought would retain for them and increase their mental elasticity. Happily the effects of the four years' labor can

[33] I Corinthians 4:7

never be taken from them—they are indelible. But they lack proper stimulus to continue and shirk their responsibility. The world needs them; the world cries out for thinkers, anywhere, everywhere!

And yet, in God's plan, mental growth is only one step. A man I knew as a brilliant student, able as a lawyer, died, literally in the gutter. He was found there by the police—a miserable drunkard. He had intellectual supremacy, but he failed to turn his mental powers to the uses of wisdom. The final object of wisdom, it has been said, is to lift the world out of trouble, misery, and pain into eternal peace. Mental growth, moral growth, and spiritual growth—all—should be nurtured without cessation from infancy to death—*without cessation.* There must needs be simultaneous progress—intellectual, moral, and spiritual, side by side, coöperating, interlinking.

## XIX

# COÖPERATION IN MORAL GROWTH

YOU who were tenderly nurtured—a product of the wise upbringing of intelligent and conscientious parents—you who in addition have had the best opportunities for education—even you, how much systematic thought do you give to the scientific development of your character? But character is the most important thing in the world! It is the index of your fate—the basis of the world's regeneration. It deteriorates thru indifference and neglect; its development requires scrupulous care and faithful application.

If you strike a discord upon the piano, you create a jarring noise disagreeable to the ear. And this is not all. You create equally displeasing effects upon your relatives, friends, and associates by your thoughtless failings or faults or omissions or commissions! Moral guilt, even each careless moral lapse, brings inevitable consequences. Even ethical indifference is to be overcome. Indifference, carelessness are phases of character-slumping. It is as tho the soul was sitting with rounded shoulders, chest collapsed, eyes vague, and the attention slack—all evidences of an absence of attention and earnestness. A worm in the flower bud mars the perfect blossom; weakness, inertia, heedlessness, sin, have the same effect upon the unfolding character; they impair the beauty and harmonious development of the soul.

It is wise to keep one's hands out of the fire, to shut the windows to keep out the storm. Is it any less wise to control the fear which paralyzes your

body, to turn the indignation which shakes your frame into constructive action, to conquer the anger which consumes like fire, to kill the jealousy that robs you of your manhood? Is it not a mark of intelligence to avoid impatience, irritability, worry? Is it not an evidence of wisdom to struggle against every impulse that irrevocably brings a corresponding penalty?

We avoid physical harm; we do not leap from twenty-foot walls. Here we see visible connection between cause and effect, but the effect of moral carelessness is less immediately apparent. Nature holds back and gives us the chance of voluntary coöperation thru love and not thru fear of penalty. So cause and effect in the psychical realm are often misunderstood, and we like to believe that they have no connection—no ill effect. Not so—as Emerson says:

"You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. Every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded . . . Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the pleasure that conceals it. Cause and effect, means and end, seed and fruit, cannot be severed for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed."

The growth of the soul is along scientific lines—naturally, since it emanates from Supreme Intelligence. Every lapse from the moral standard has its precise effect; it presses the electric button, disconnects the current, and extinguishes the light of growth. All who want light must conform to the law that brings it. In general, people prefer moral development to retrogression; constantly, however, their acts do not accord with this preference. Many persons are like the youngster eager to go to the Sunday School picnic. The neighborhood is seething with the stir of excited young life. The mother tells

the boy if he pulls his sister's hair once more, he shall not go. Without pause for thought the boy repeats the offense. Later, he peeps from behind the blinds in his darkened room and watches the gaily loaded buses pass. He blames his mother, not himself; he blames his sister for having tempting tresses. Finally, as the hours drag by, he repents, but he had already set in motion a chain of events that cannot be staid. It is too late! His mother's punishment has introduced the boy to Nature's method which is inexorable. He is too young yet to have observed this—a penalty for every violation of the law that governs the growth of the soul.

Those who will not walk along the path Providence enjoins bring upon themselves difficulties and penalties, and miss countless satisfactions and delights that accompany strength and goodness. Peace of mind is not the least of these. Real goodness—God-ness—is attractive. So few make of behavior the science that is intended—that is necessary. And to think! Nothing can compare in importance with this science which ought to regulate every act of daily living.

God's fixed plan for the Growth of Character is possible to carry out only thru our efforts. We strike the keynote of our coöperation by the sort of thoughts we welcome. We produce the theme of life by our visions and intuitions. We create the harmonies by our activities. And the whole symphony is founded upon our initiative, the proper use of our will-power, the strength of our faith, our search of self, and upon the quality of our religion. Coöperation begins by setting our thoughts in order and it continues by scrupulous care in daily thought, word, and deed.

## XX

# COÖPERATION IN THOUGHT—A CREATIVE FORCE

THE sun bursts forth from behind a rift in the clouds. What intensity of light! Such light sometimes bursts upon our comprehension. It illumines a sentence read ten times before—and this time a new meaning is disclosed—and we understand! I had this experience: I was reading, in Professor Jastrow's "The Subconscious," a chapter on "Thought." On that day I took one step forward in apprehending the meaning of life. It is strange how we live on, hearing but not comprehending. Experience, study, thought, prepare us to understand, but, until we are ready, the meaning eludes us! I had read this truth in our own Bible, in that of The Buddha, and in the works of great philosophers. And now like the sun from the sky, rays of light were focused on the words:

*We reap in our lives what we have sown by our thoughts.*

This is as certain as the working of a machine under law!

"As a man thinketh in his heart so *is* he."[34] Most of us know how inevitably acts are reflected in character, friendships, and surroundings—but that every thought of ours is a determining factor in our lives is less clearly realized. I pictured to myself at that time the life fabric that I had woven by my thoughts. Think of it! How careless I had been in the selection of threads. I had accepted them as they came, good, bad, and indifferent. However

[34] Proverbs 23:7

mindful I had been of moral responsibility over words and actions, I had done nothing consciously to regulate my thoughts. I had read everything—I had read scandals and murders and now these were an essential part of me. In the warp and woof of my fabric there were blemishes impossible to bleach from the final product!

"From my mother," Marcus Aurelius tells us, "I learned abstinence not only from evil deeds, but even from evil thoughts."

In the stillness of that day, my conscious soul rose in protest. From that time forward I willed never to read ugly details of scandal, sin, disease, or murder. I willed that my thoughts should voluntarily dwell not on the shadows of life but on its lights. This I have partly succeeded in doing and I have aimed day after day to substitute constructive for destructive thought. This is not dodging but is facing the serious issues of living with the upbuilding thought that creates. No one thinks unto himself alone for the good of one human soul is the good of all.

In the superphysical world of thought, we find the law of Cause and Effect in action. St. Paul perceived this truth and wrote to the Philippians what they should think about:

"Whatsoever things are *true*
Whatsoever things are *honest*
Whatsoever things are *just*
Whatsoever things are *pure*
Whatsoever things are *lovely*
Whatsoever things are *of good report*
If there be any *virtue*
If there be any *praise*
THINK OF THESE THINGS!"

Thoughts of the above upbuilding nature constitute a *Cause.*

Winning peace—" to have the God of peace with you," constitutes the *Effect.*

The facts of thought constitute an exact science just as do the facts of mineralogy, geology, chemistry, and physics. No one wants discontent, unrest, and unhappiness, but there are thoughts that lead directly to them.

" Whatsoever things are *untrue*
Whatsoever things are *dishonest*
Whatsoever things are *unjust*
Whatsoever things are *impure*
Whatsoever things are *unlovely*
Whatsoever things are of *bad report*
If there be any *sin*
If there be any *blame*
Do *Not* Think of These Things."

Thoughts of the ruinous nature of those above constitute a *Cause.*

Your own devolution—a slipping backward—discord, unrest, unhappiness constitutes the *Effect.*

" Thou canst pass thy life in an equable flow of happiness, if thou canst go by the right way, and *think* and act in the right way."[35]

Ordinarily one thinks promiscuously, just as it happens. One lets his mind wander where it may, over what occurred today, yesterday, or the day before, or what is to come. He may let his thoughts dwell on what he has read recently, upon what flashes into his mind, upon the conscious or unconscious suggestions of another's words or acts—but this haphazard method is not necessary. Every one is privileged to accept or reject any line of thought, and it is his plain duty to reject all that interferes with his own good.

[35] Marcus Aurelius

"We ought to check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without purpose and useless."[36] Each man must do his own checking, get control of his own mind, and divert his thoughts into beneficial channels. They are under his own control and should be harnessed to his bidding.

And yet this is what occurs frequently: Something has happened to arouse a man's indignation; he rehearses the scene, the conversation, goes over it in detail. He is sick of the thought of it by now, but he allows it to possess him, to fill his mind. Whatever the subject of conversation, he breaks out with some fresh detail or a repetition of one already told more than once. If at night, his mind is so active that he does not sleep; he tosses and turns, dismisses the subject, but the same vicious circle returns.

Thought is governed by a law that causes it to concentrate itself upon any event that has aroused the emotions. Anger—hatred are emotions gone wrong. Constructive emotions are powerful psychic forces that can be focused upon thought to create good, just as steam is a force that can be harnessed to do work. Any emotion wasted on hatred, scorn, jealousy, or even dislike is ammunition thrown away. The thoughts that lead to them are all wrong; well regulated thoughts discourage evil emotions. "Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts," said Isaiah, "for the thoughts of the unrighteous are destructive."[37]

Even careless or inexpedient thinking is prohibited. As again Marcus Aurelius said, "Such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind." Every normal human being wants his mind suffused with sunshine and not clouds. Then gloomy thoughts are tabooed; they

[36] Marcus Aurelius
[37] Isaiah 55:7

increase a fit of depression and feed melancholy; they react on health, serenity, and environment. But how is one to get rid of thoughts of this nature? He may go out, see somebody, get a change of scene, and forget, or do something for someone. He may stir about, do some violent exercise, look in the mirror and laugh at himself, or get absorbed in an interesting book. What is even better, he may study something that requires all his attention, and, if he perseveres, he will forget himself. He may learn cheerful and inspiring quotations. If he is suffering from depression at night, he may concentrate his thoughts upon the deepest significance of quotations that he has stored in his mind, useful for such an emergency. Something he should do to distract his mind from the obsessing thought. If the cause is annoyance, he may fix his attention upon the virtues of the offending person, make excuses for him, or put himself in his place. If none of these suit his mood, he may dwell on the special virtue missing that caused the ordeal. Again, perhaps, he may contemplate his favorite manifestation of physical nature—the upturned earth, the budding trees, apple blossoms, the spring, a gorgeous sunset. Anything that he can do that is hurtful to none, which will turn his destructive thought aside, anything of any sort, on any line—let him do it! For the following is the law:

" Keep thy heart (inmost or private thought) with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life."[38] *The issues of life! Out of the inner recesses of man flow inevitable results.* And as I heard Rabindranath Tagore say in his lecture on " A World of Personality ":

" We create external conditions by our thoughts." We create not only our own happiness, but regulate our own environment. This is aside from the sur-

[38] Proverbs 4:23

roundings in which we are born—another matter, but equally under the law. As the Great Gautama said:

" Let pass thru thy mind, my son, only the image thou wouldst desire to see become a truth. Meditate only upon the wish of thy heart—seeing first that it is such that can wrong no one and is not ignoble. Then will it take earthly form and draw near to thee. This is the law that creates."

What could be more explicit?

*Laws of nature govern physical matter—the densest form of Original Primal Substance; laws also govern manifestations of Primal Substance invisible to us*—THOUGHTS.

Strike a tuning fork tuned to the note " c ", and the vibrations which it emits affect in the next room another tuning fork keyed to the same note. A similar musical tone—of the same number of vibrations per second—is set in motion. The more resonant the original sound created by the first fork, the stronger the music from its mate. A third tuning fork by the side of the second, tuned to note " d ", remains uninfluenced. Their vibrations are not in harmony; there is nothing in common between them.

There is evidence that this law works in the invisible realm of thought. A thought from another mind reaches you and not the man at your side, because you attract the thoughts to which you are tuned; whether or not thoughts to which you are tuned reach your *conscious* mind is another problem. We are immersed in a sea of thoughts emanating from beings like ourselves, and many ideas " pop " into the mind from this source. Such suggestions we are free to accept or reject; they reach our consciousness only because we are tuned to receive them.

A friend of mine lay awake long into the night, deep in thought, anxious and troubled in spirit. She

could not solve her difficulty—she was indeed in a predicament. Whatever move she might make, it seemed, would increase the complex problem—in despair, she thought, "I am in a 'cul de sac'." Immediately her young son across the room awoke, sat up in bed, and cried out, "Mother, Mother, are you caught like a rat in a trap?" He does not know French. She had not spoken a word. *The substance of the thought had reached him in his sleep.*

This is but a single illustration of the fact that a thought does travel from one mind to another, that thought is a force. Balzac regarded thoughts as great natural forces. As he said that motion and number give rise to *all phenomena,* we may deduce that motion and number give rise to the phenomena of thought. That is to say, thoughts are doubtless forces comparable to light, heat, and electricity—all vibrating energies. Each force causes ether to vibrate in harmony with its own special sort of vibration. This is no more wonderful than wireless telegraphy!

The class of thought one harbors is the pitch to which his thoughts are tuned; he attracts like thought originating in others and remains immune to those foreign to his mind. He reproduces in outward conditions harmonious surroundings if his thoughts are tuned to that constant pitch. No one should be resigned to either chronic illness or disheartening surroundings, because they give way before persistent faith and expectation. Resignation kills effort and annihilates the spirit of initiative in the thought realm. However adamant an uncongenial environment may be, "God's ways are higher than our ways," and there is therefore possibility of bringing forth light out of darkness.

A harassed soul concentrating his thought upon desired harmonious conditions must be sure that they do not interfere with the rights of any other.

Such a thought is destructive, bearing within it the seed of its own penalty; he cannot escape in due time a return blow. That is the law! Great changes have been accomplished thru constructive thought-power—steady, purposeful, persistent. It can be done, has been done, and is done; but to be achieved within the law, it must be in a spirit of love. As the Buddha taught, it must be such as to wrong no one, and must not be ignoble.

"Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts."[39]

A man may, in a measure, be responsible for the effects his thoughts produce in another weaker than himself. He did not commit the crime but wished that it might happen; his thought reached a weaker and less cautious man and aided him thereby in his decision to kill.

A woman I know, roundly rated a friend for being continually in bad luck. She seemed followed by a perverse streak of nature. "It is her own fault," said my friend. "She is always complaining; she is jealous and selfish; and she is never satisfied. She blames everybody but herself, constantly talks of misfortune and sickness, and expects it. She gets what is coming to her." At the time, I was horrified at the lack of sympathy. Now I realize that altho wanting in comprehensive love and understanding, yet she was correct in her diagnosis of the case. Nevertheless, many a one is unaware that he is the builder of his own life and the arbiter of his own fate. He does not know that his own habit of thought is the foundation upon which his life is constructed, and that he himself is the primary cause of his own difficulties. He is consequently as sincerely a subject for sympathy, commiseration, and understanding love as tho really the victim of a relentless

[39] Matthew 15:18

fate. He has not yet sought for the truth and is not in tune with it.

Such a myriad of causes, such a chain of events lead up to one's present environment! It is the sum of every thought, every judgment, every act of the past. No one blames an infant for touching a hot stove. Neither should one be impatient with human beings who have followed the path of destructive thought, and who, thru a life of weakness, unrestraint, and an absence of self-control, have built up a miserable external condition.

Some one says, "Thought is not the foundation of my life. I have wanted something for years, for a life time, and I have thought about it, but never got it." And I say unto such—that proves nothing except that you have not used the proper combination. You have wavered, you have not been persistent, you have not concentrated your vital, psychical forces upon it. You have not conformed to the working of the law that underlies the creative power of thought. No experiment can be performed in the chemical laboratory unless every condition is precise and exact; this is no less a fact in the psychical law.

The average individual wearies after, oh! exertion of such short duration! If the control of one's life were as simple as adding, by now most of us would have conquered. Majestic powers cannot be brought into being without persistent and enormous effort, without self-control and mind-control. It takes years to train the physical muscles to play the piano, how much more time should one expect to take for the training of the higher powers infinite in their possibilities. Even if one knows intellectually, and accepts the truth of his potential powers of thought —knowledge of the fact is one thing, that knowledge translated into individual action is another. Potential powers do not grow into actual powers by superficial wishing. It means control of the mind; it

means unwearied persistence in the re-education of one's point of view, of one's whole soul, thru a process of control, thru intelligent suggestion.

In "Bible Mystery and Bible Meaning," it is stated (1) that the creative power of man's thought is one of the great teachings of the Bible (2) that creative power is inherent in man's thought, and (3) that there are two psychological laws to be noted:

The creative power of thought.

The amenability of thought to control by suggestion.

With regard to the creative power of thought: "God is Spirit." Man is made "in the image and likeness of God," therefore at the center of his being, man, too, is Spirit—a part of the Great Spirit.

"God is One." God is One even if projections from Him go to make up individuals. That manifestation of Spirit that goes to make up man at his center *is* God. That is why man is divine.

God's method of action is the same whether it is expressed by the Universal Creator Himself—or by the new individual centers—men. That is to say, Spirit has the same mode of working as God or as Spirit in man. *This mode of action is thought.*

God, the One Spirit, contemplated, before creating the Universe; Spirit in man contemplates, thinks before creating his own world.

Any one with time, patience, enthusiasm, ardor, and vision, can demonstrate this truth for himself. It may be in a large way or it may be in a small way; but even in a small way, the soul shows forth its latent possibilities. It is a beginning of larger development. It requires regular periods of concentration on the desired end. Constant suggestion, a reiterated thought persistently held, even when diametrically opposed to the present fact, educate and educe the imaged attractions. Eventually these methods accomplish the specific end in view.

"The Lord of Hosts has sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." And, as we find in Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero Worship," "All things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment of thoughts that dwelt in the great men sent into the world." Some one asked Sir Isaac Newton how he happened to discover the "Law of Gravitation"—"By always thinking of it," he replied.

In response to changed temperature, the vapor of the atmosphere is condensed to rain; in response to the dedication of your activities to your highest ideals, according to the principle that governs growth, your thoughts shall be materialized in abundant harvest. For: *"Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established."*[40]

Thy thought shall be established! Thought is a great natural force governed by the scientific action of the law of Cause and Effect. One thinks before he speaks; one thinks before he acts—thought is basic. It should not be left to run about wildly, without defined purpose. It is impossible to coöperate with effectiveness if this important realm of endeavor is neglected. The evolutionary plan for the progress of the human family demands the development of the power of thought—with skill, intelligence, unselfishness and love.

The law is stated in the Hindu Scriptures:

"All that we are is a result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him."

[40] Proverbs 16:3

## XXI

# COÖPERATION IN VISION

A GOOD woman I know, never let her boys read fairy stories because they are not true; and yet, nothing else has quite the educational value in training the imagination of children. Without the imagination the human being would cease to do creative work! Art, music, invention, literature would stand still or deteriorate. We should have no more improvements in our towns and cities, no more bridges, ships, houses, machines, no more radical inventions. Imagination is needed even to create a dress, or to make a first-class apple pie. Every project has to be imagined by some one.

The word *vision* has three meanings: First, the act of seeing objects; Second, an apparition: Third, the power of perceiving by the eye of intelligence or imagination. It is the third meaning we are considering here. In accomplishing anything at all, visualization—the power of making pictures in the mind—is a potent necessity.

A dry-goods clerk told me with pride that he had been behind the same counter for twenty-five years. I could have wept for him! He had staid right there because he had allowed himself to become an automaton—powerless to vision himself in a more responsible position—ignorant of the creative powers lying latent within his soul. He was in the basement, too!

I know a man of large affairs who considers all the problems connected with his work, selects the most important and hardest achievement, and gets to work. It would be an impossible task for most of

us to bring to a successful issue. The vision fills him with intense enthusiasm. He dreams, makes mental pictures, and starts his activities to accomplish his purpose. Thru the man who first refuses to further his project, he meets one even better suited to assist him. From unexpected quarters aid is given; strangely, influences are brought to bear, obstacles are removed, conditions are changed—and behold! his vision becomes a reality in the visible world.

Without vision, out feet are rooted in the soil; our world stops where the facts of the physical world end. What is there to urge us to intellectual growth if we are unable to picture its advantages? What incentive to moral development if we are incapable of imagining its promise? What is there to open up the wonders of spiritual reality if we are impotent in the use of vision?

Vision—it is the creative force that impresses its own images on the invisible ether, and sets in motion vibrations that affect everything in harmony with themselves, sets them in motion and sends them wherever they may effect transmutation into visible reality. We have created our visible environment in adult age; we have externalized it thru that very process of visualization—conscious or unconscious as we may have been of the laws that underlie it. People who have no vision are left behind in the race; they create nothing; they neither reach up nor out; they do not foresee; they are without imagination; they build for themselves no future. As Solomon, the man of wisdom, said:

*" Where there is no vision, the people perish."*[41]

[41] Proverbs 29 :18

## XXII

## COÖPERATION IN WORDS

THE other day a visitor spoke to me eloquently on the importance of keeping the atmosphere free from scolding and wrangling. At the home of a relative he had heard the mother say angrily "Don't you ever-mm-mm-mm-mm-rr-rr-rr rr" He lost the words, but not their raw effect. He looked at me impressively and said:

"No child should ever be subjected to such sounds; it is wrong for a child to be forced to carry the memory of them." And he added:

"I have made every mother I have said this to—furious. They think because I am a bachelor I know nothing of the provocation."

He certainly expects a high order of self-control, but what would we do without ideals to urge us to its exercise?

I have heard persons coming out of church criticise and backbite unmercifully—why had they gone? Supposedly to worship and to get inspiration for nobler living. But as Carlyle says:

"This is not what I call religion, this profession and assertion . . . but the thing the man does practically believe (and this is often enough without asserting it even to himself, and much less others), the thing a man does *practically* lay to heart and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and *creatively determines the rest.*"

Worship is an outflow of reverent love. How deep are the roots of that love if we only superficially

apply the rules of daily living given by Spiritual Specialists! And such rules are laid down for us to follow.

We are told to put away "all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking with all malice."[42] But what can bring it poignantly home to our souls that it is not a putting away of these things spasmodically, not that evil speaking should be avoided for three days and then resumed, but that every minute of the day from that of waking to sleep should be one of unrelaxed vigilance? We are told not to dispute and yet we do dispute; we are told not to murmur and yet we do murmur. We murmur if it rains, if the mail is late, if the neighbor's dog barks, or if his rooster crows. We murmur if we are crossed, if we are disappointed.

I knew at one time a good man with a good wife. No one could be with them fifteen minutes without being forced to wait while they disputed over some trivial and fruitless point. I called them by telephone once—asking them a question, and while waiting for my reply, heard a sharp, quick altercation as to their decision. Every murmur is a scientific fact in the psychical realm and reacts upon the sweetest soul. Their accumulation produces vicious effects.

A clear line of conduct along constructive lines leading to coöperation with the Great Plan for the world's progress is revealed in the Bible. Our fault—as it seems to me—lies in our failure to carry out these rules in their finer degrees. We may be beyond expression of anger, but have we overcome that of its shadow—impatience? How do we speak after someone has kept us waiting for an unreasonable length of time? Or when someone asks us the same question over and over, or another disagrees with us every time we open our lips to say

[42] Ephesians 4:31

something? We may spend our lives in noble effort to better social conditions, but if in our daily dealings we speak impatiently or bitterly against those who block us, if we use resentful words against those blind to the world's needs—we are to that extent betraying the cause to which we are giving our service. We retard our own growth, diminish our value to society, and militate against the world's progress. While on the one hand we administer good, we demolish it on the other.

Your niece Jane thinks better of Mrs. Moore than you have reason to believe Mrs. Moore deserves, and yet it is seldom necessary for you to undeceive her. Jane's good opinion inspires Mrs. Moore to act in such a way as to merit it. We all try to live up to the best expected of us. This is one reason why it is morally constructive to dwell on good points rather than bad and morally destructive to imagine evil in our hearts against our neighbor. Moreover thinking and talking of the bad, tunes us to its reception. One who would scorn to be a thief steals one's good opinion of another.

And Mote-Beholders are very depressing! They bear down all social intercourse with conversational lead. They complain of someone, introduce petty trifles unworthy of a place in thought or memory. Thru ignorance or dull perceptions or because of their own inner unrest or irritability, they are either unaware of the disquieting influence they produce upon all present or are indifferent to it. Exposure to extreme heat or cold is preferable. Like a hen pecking at grain, the Mote-Beholder pecks away at the motes he expertly finds in all with whom he comes in contact; his words are a series of trifling condemnations.

Law governs in the realm of words. Every gratuitous judgment of another sets forces at work in two directions—against the judged, and against

the critic. Consider a plain statement of this truth by one of authority in ethical values:

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doeth the same things."[43]

Have you ever watched yourself to prove this truth? The next time you criticize or judge, make a mental note of it and observe what you will do yourself within a month. "Thou that judgest doeth the same things." Moreover, you must pay; as you judged unjustly, so another shall judge you unjustly. Law governs in the realm of words. Scorching judgments, pitiless criticism, in the absence of sympathy or tenderness, undermine the character. Even mildly unpleasant critical words directed toward those who have the right to consider themselves friends, hurl the offender over a precipice. Loose censure of friends by friends shouts its own disloyalty. If you hear—horrified—a friend with ruthless cuts dissect another, and if soon after you are present when the critic delivers a suave compliment—even one that she can honorably give to this person—you know that your turn will come. You know that in that friend there are ungentle reserves—unsympathetic, misunderstanding. You grow wary; others grow wary, friends drop away under one pretext or another. And why not? What is friendship without loving tolerance? True friendship accepts friends as they are. Suppose they do have a dinner party and do not include you—what difference does it make? Suppose they do come to see you less often—what of it? Suppose they do select someone else when they might have had you—how can you care? You have your place in their hearts—others have theirs.

Each human being differs from any other—even

[43] Romans 2:1

in the degree of the same quality. One person is developed more, another less; each has his own distinctive background, his weaknesses, his strength, his special temptations. Dwelling on the imperfections and sins of others depresses the psychical atmosphere and leaves soul unrest—you must have noticed it!

A flagrant sin need not be condoned in order to avoid judgment of the sinner. What do we know about his inner life—to us a closed book? We may judge the sin, but color the judgment of the sinner with sympathetic understanding and love. This type of criticism made alone with the transgressor may be beneficial. Are criticisms of self painful because one thinks himself perfect? But—until all the lessons this sphere of existence can teach us are learned—no one is! It is admirable to receive criticism as tho directed to another—without prejudice in one's own favor.

We are here—souls! shut away from each other by material bodies—you within yours, I within mine. What I know of you, you reveal by your words and deeds. Are you, within there, lovelier than you let us know? Your words are symbols of your soul quality. Are you too prodigal with them—too careless—ignorant of their potency—unaware of their influence—and of their scientific value? The tongue is an unruly member. No wonder it was said:

"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."[44]

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[44] Psalms 141:3

## XXIII

## COÖPERATION IN DEEDS

IT amuses us to observe a fellow-being preach one thing and practice another, yet it has an encouraging side. If we have good thoughts and speak words that are sincerely worth while, we take the initial step to future action kin to the thoughts and words—we make an educational beginning. Most of humanity profess better than they do because the ideals that urge to action come first. We are in a perpetual state of transmuting our highest thoughts into deeds. As we proceed, a new vision comes with still more advanced conception of human behavior. It is a continuous process of catching up, of living in our external life that which has its source within.

Thoughts and words pave the way for their expression in deeds, but we are tripped up by bad habits of inaction which we have allowed ourselves to form. Some of us need a goad to prod us into the use of our initiative. Most of us would prefer to have our behavior equal the idealism our words express, were it not such hard work. We are too indolent to exert our power of will, and to spur ourselves to self-control; we are inclined to hide behind the excuse that it is not our nature. Ah! but if in the history of the soul's past, one has not learned to be instantly alert to do whatever at the moment seems best, then it is time now to learn the lesson and to make such action natural.

In general, the final proof of the sincerity of our words is in our acts. We are told not to love in word, neither in tongue, "but in *deed* and in truth."[45]

[45] I John 3:18

That is the business we are to set about doing if we care to cooperate with Nature's plan to hasten our halting evolutionary progress. At the start we need ideals; we should invite them into our thought life, encourage all that incites our interest, that inspires and arouses our enthusiasm. *We need to know why we are here on earth that we may drive ourselves to deeds that count.* We need scientifically exact knowledge of the reaction upon ourselves of everything that we do. We need, in fact, to make use of those very powers that constitute us human beings.

Nature manifestly intends us to labor. Those who are deprived of work or who deprive themselves of its benefits have little conception of what they miss. The reaction of pleasure experienced from work well done is fundamental. I was told by a man of exceptional intelligence and comprehension —who had been superintendent of a Home for Defectives—that the satisfaction for work well done is one of the strongest characteristics left to his charges. It was thru that quality that he could make his strongest appeal. He cited the case of an adult whose mentality, I believe, never grew beyond that of a boy of eight or ten. He found that the young man could polish well. He praised him, he encouraged him, and finally the defective himself was never satisfied till he had reached perfection. He aroused his interest, his ambition, and enthusiasm to such a degree that there is probably no better polisher in the country. The undeveloped fellow who bade fair to be a life-long charge to the government now occupies a good position as a polisher of engines, and prides himself that no one can do a better job. He is self-supporting and beamingly happy.

At any age of development, what we do is the sum of what we are. We may think, we may have vision, but at the same time be wanting in the force of will

to execute. We need all three. We may have the force of will to execute, and yet be in such utter darkness concerning our divine potentialities as to lack the vision of doing. To fulfill our destiny, we must be both creators and workers. And there is another point—what we do is not so important as how we do it, and the attitude of mind we hold toward it. It is not the actual job done, but the soul growth that results from labor perfectly done that counts. The simplest physical task teaches its psychical lesson of patience, order, precision, accuracy, and judgment. The way in which it is accomplished reflects the inner life and the degree of advancement of the soul of the worker.

Look, for instance, at the way various individuals wash dishes. Every grade of soul is shown from the one who exercises quick, careful, accurate movements, who uses hot water and soap suds frequently changed, hot rinsing water, clean towels, to the slattern who makes a sloppy mess too unpleasant to detail. We find all grades; some just miss the sweetness of freshness; others let the towels do duty for rinsing water, and so on down the scale.

As a child, I used to slip into my brother's room in his absence to admire his collections. I never failed to regard with fascination the motto that hung conspicuously on his wall:

"Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well."

There is a reason behind these words. No work is too humble or too unimportant to justify carelessness. Surely—surely, work reacts for better or for worse upon the soul engaged in it. The slip-shod sort that is becoming so common in these days is a menace to civilization. It could not exist if intelligent courses in ethics were obligatory in the public schools of our country.

Work is not something to be dodged but to be sought after—each person to engage in that which he can do best. Work well done is its own reward! There is no delight that takes its place, no satisfaction to be compared with it. The fact that it reacts to lift the soul straight up into a state of joy shows that it is in accord with Nature's plan for our evolution. Work is a unique pleasure. It gives us opportunity to be humble imitators of the Creator of this universe. Each may be a center of activity, each a doer of work, a dispenser of beauty in every accomplishment.

Thank Heaven, the day has come when the fear of losing caste no longer need prevent any woman from doing useful work—and when idle women are looked upon askance! We've got to work if we want to enter into the great evolutionary scheme—every one of us, not necessarily to earn money, but to have an occupation into which to throw our energies, to give play to our potential powers however modest they may appear to be. Not only every young man, but every young woman as well, should be educated to a special interest in some line of work. It is a genuine deprivation to be without it. The field of endeavor is infinite.

The development of a son's innate possibilities is vital; the daughter's none the less so even if restricted to a preparation for marriage. Education makes wiser mothers, more responsible guardians, and more interesting companions. Education is not to accumulate facts but to hasten the evolution of the individual. Marriage is not the end and aim of all for either man or woman; it forms only a part of life. Marriage, motherhood, fatherhood—a matchless school for the unselfish development of the soul! Let the spiritual, facial expression of many mothers in maturity bear witness of this fact! In family life at its best there burns a fire of service one to the

other, but its flames blaze forth into the world beyond its circle. After twenty years of family service, the altruism of a real mother cannot be confined; it is an asset of human society on which too high an estimate cannot be placed.

During the war and after, men have been surprised at the genuine accomplishments outside the home of their wives—at their unexpected abilities and talents—at their executive organizing genius—all could have been used before but for opportunity withheld. This vast number of adult women have something real to offer. When this fact is properly understood and accepted, and when those who wish may enter into whatever fields of usefulness their evolved talents lie, civilization will be enriched. What a waste of woman force there has been and still is in this wide, wide world! In every ideal home the husband consults his wife about every important problem. Everywhere the feminine element is needed, and the masculine element—both; the combination is necessary to the perfect whole.

We need work to bring out the divine potentialities within. As we labor, every act is a help to our growth or a hindrance; every deed proceeding from human relationships is in coöperation with or antagonistic to the Supreme Purpose. The immediate obligation of every one of us is earnest concern over the degree to which we conform to the Great Plan. Are we thieves, drunkards, revilers, or extortioners? We breathe a sigh of relief—no, we are not. Yet are we entirely innocent in the matter of reviling? Do we never want what another has? We do not get drunk, but do we indulge our appetites in a milder degree, and eat more than we need? Do we behave with self-indulgence? The weightier sins outgrown, is it not possible that our weaknesses lie in other directions? If we act with " respect to persons " we commit sin. Because our neighbor lives in a

sumptuous home, do we treat him with added deference? Why should we? The fact that this friend is rich—does it in any way affect our behavior toward him? Or, if another is poor, do we pay him scant attention? If so, let us ask ourselves—why?

If we enter into an enthusiastic crusade against our lapses, there is one class of acts that flow from a form of abnormal egotism to be eliminated—*self-pity*. Such deeds must be attacked from their source within the soul. If we conform to law, we rejoice with them that rejoice; we cannot do this if we sink into the mire of self-pity—one of the most unfortunate weaknesses. "There are within the confines of human society both men and women who might truly be designated as 'Constitutional Martyrs.' We have all seen them. They are a distinct type. These are they who are forever playing the role of martyr. They are martyrs at home. They are martyrs in society. They are martyrs to duty. They are martyrs to their religion. They are, in truth, martyrs all the time, everywhere and to everything with which they find it possible to identify themselves. Individuals of this type are never so nearly happy as when they are utterly miserable, or can make others think they are miserable. About the only comfort they seem to enjoy is that which they extract from the enervating emotion of self-pity. Like a pestilence, they carry misery and sorrow wherever their influence radiates. They poison every atmosphere into which they come."[46]

And so we might pursue our way thru a list of virtues that even to the last detail of perfection are for us to conquer *eventually*. Indeed, such mastery must be achieved by the race. The road is long and often discouraging, but we can ill afford to ignore the law. Nature helps enormously by providing us with an invaluable assistant—habit. Every at-

[46] TK in *The Great Work*

tempt, every triumph registers its effect. Impulsive action is the fruit of the seeds planted by self. In our faults and weaknesses, the power of habit works against us; at each indulgence, the groove is deepened. Any practiced virtue becomes cumulative until after persistent effort it becomes spontaneous; and we can turn our attention to a new line of effort, for the first has become a habit. The consecutive moments bring the lessons—it is our part to learn.

"Is your present experience hard to bear?

"Yet remember that never again perhaps in all your days will you have a chance of the same.

"Do not fly the lesson, but have a care that you master it while you have the opportunity."[47]

"Enter into the life which is eternal, pass thru the gate of indifference to the palace of mastery, thru the door of love out into the great open of deliverance."

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[47] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

## XXIV

# COÖPERATION IN THE EXERCISE OF THE WILL-POWER

FREEDOM of the will—*that* must not be denied to the soul of man! It is a pernicious philosophy that robs one of the great driving force of human life—that which makes possible evolutionary progress. Man's will is free and he can be deprived of it.

I recall attending years ago, an hypnotic show given by a noted hypnotist. He made a reluctant boy come to the platform. He was one of our town boys who had been hypnotised by him the night before, and his will had been sufficiently subjugated to make him obey. I felt instinctively that something was wrong. It was a repellant procedure. The hypnotist told the boy that he was a dog; the young man got down on all fours. The hypnotist told him to bark; he barked; to jump, he jumped. The audience roared with merriment.

Once I saw on a bed in a shop window, a ghastly white-faced man in a state of catalepsy. He was there as an advertisement; the hypnotist was to give a performance that night with this poor fellow as his victim. Another time I had witnessed a hypnotist stand on a man in a cataleptic condition stretched rigidly like a board across two chairs with no support except under his head and feet. It was a villainous act! Altho the hypnotised subject was not conscious on the physical plane, and did not feel this at the time, it must have caused serious injury to him. Men reduced to this state—far worse than slavery, I am told—do not live many years, and gen-

erally become insane. Why should they not? The man who has become completely subjugated to the will of the hypnotist stops only at murder because the inner intention of the hypnotist is to have him not murder. He obeys the inner intention, not the verbal expression; he responds to the hypnotist when he but *thinks* the command; he executes a whispered order when it is impossible for the whisper to reach his cotton-filled ears. Hypnotism is a force on a plane above the physical.

There is no doubt but that the hypnotist deprives his subject of the free use of his will-power. We have only to compare our own ability to exercise our will with that of the hypnotic slave to recognize that we have a very definite thing to lose—the freedom of will.

The tissues of the brain cells of an habitual drinker are affected with poison; his awareness becomes dimmed. He has created abnormal conditions in the brain that make it difficult for him even in his sober moments to exercise his free will. When he reels along the street his power is feeble indeed, and he is deprived of a very definite thing—the freedom of will.

Whether the will is free or not may be an interesting philosophical toss ball. We may use fallacious arguments, but normal human beings know as an intuitive truth their freedom to choose between good and evil, to elect what course of action to pursue. They know that they are free to get up or to sit down, to lift their voices in song, to protest, to remain silent, to eat or to refrain from eating, to choose voluntarily to die of starvation. They know if a lie slips out seemingly against the will, it is the result of previous inattention and inaction. Formerly they have not exerted their wills to tell the truth, and have therefore permitted in themselves the growth of a disgraceful habit. They know that

immediately they care enough, they can tell the truth, they can use a free and uninfluenced will toward creating a habit of telling exact facts.

A bad habit is as paralyzing to one's efforts as alcohol poisoning is to the brain—in either case, the difficulty may be overcome by the will. It is only necessary to produce an incentive powerful enough to arouse the interest and stimulate the desire to become a better man. The most debauched drinkers have exerted their wills and reformed. The slaves to bad habits, they have given sufficient attention to their elimination and have exerted enough will-power to substitute the good—their present choice.

It is much simpler and more sensible to be on guard against forming bad habits than it is easy to get rid of them after they are formed. Have you, for example, any habit of a pet fear or otherwise self-interesting idiosyncrasy? There are times, then, when you are sure to be a nuisance to someone. A girl is afraid of worms, or cannot hear a pencil squeak, or can't bear a cat in the room; her family cater to her peculiarity. It was " cute " at the age of five, interesting, perhaps, even at the age of twenty, but by that time she has begun to make someone uncomfortable. To avoid trouble, her companions make the best of her whims and fancies. Before she is thirty, they are smiling behind her back, and by the time she is forty, she is a distinct trial.

Such characteristics are selfish and self-indulgent. They show a weakness in the discipline of self which everyone has to undergo. They are stupid because every fear becomes more and more accentuated and grows in importance and power till it possesses the soul. Any fear, thunder storms—most persons could be afraid of them if from the beginning they did not discourage such weakness—burglars, mice, are visible signs that that individual has not taken herself in hand for needed discipline. It is a matter

of attention and will-power. No one is too old to begin to rid himself of foolish habits—to change first the line of thought, to use vigorous affirmation, and to exercise self-control. Will is a powerful subjugating agency. If we wish to strengthen our will we must exercise it.

We weaken our wills by self-indulgence. We lie in bed when we know we ought to get up; for five additional minutes of comfort, we sacrifice our strength of character. We fail by eating that extra muffin that we did not need at breakfast, by drinking the coffee that does not digest well or that overstimulates us. We are wanting in stamina when we sit cosily in an arm chair and fail to rise instantly when our help is needed. Self-indulgence! It is a common weakness too carelessly considered. How do we expect to manifest god-like power in any degree unless we have constantly in mind the exercise of self-discipline and self-control?

The exercise of the will is often stimulated by the emotions, but when the feelings are aroused, a special guard is needed over the judgment. If at that time the decisions differ from those made when the mind was clear, it is safe to exert the will-power in the direction of the preconceived opinion. When in a moment of calm judgment a decision is once made, and the right time comes for action, it should be rushed thru immediately. It is no time for indulgence of the body's rosy comfort. Life is made up of these lesser opportunities to grow in strength of will-power.

When we indulge in peevishness or annoyance, utter an exclamation, when we drop something, or let anger encompass us, we weaken—not develop our wills. When we answer back, when we are worried, anxious, or afraid, we have lost an opportunity for self-government. Nature insists upon the control of self. In the end we must conquer for we are

buffeted about till we learn that self-control is included in the evolutionary plan of our unfolding.

We weaken our wills by talking too much, talking about disagreeable subjects when no good is in view, dealing out scandal or scurrilous tales—a cheap way of creating interest. By mercilessly mauling our neighbor's affairs and activities—also a contemptible form of self-indulgence—we again act weakly and against the law of Growth. For observe:

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good."[48]

Circumstances arise pushing to action two men who differ fundamentally in their points of view. One exerts a limp will; the other is goaded to achieve incredible success. There are influences, however, capable of awakening the weaker man to a greater interest, inciting him to will-action. But anyone that is to act well must think right; wrong thinking discourages the initial impulse to act. What he thinks to-day, the comparisons that he makes, his likes and dislikes, his beliefs, occasion the extent to which he uses his will a month from now. If his righteous desires are feeble, they will not influence him to exert himself. To increase his output of will, he needs a new line of dynamic thought, a fresh point of view. Any point of view, any belief that discourages him from action he may regard with suspicion. *A knowledge of the truth of why one is here on earth, and of the actual realities of existence, incites a person to use every power he possesses.* It causes him to respond to opportunities for their exercise, for their instant and intelligent application. We need to reason, to develop rational judgments, to increase in wisdom that at the right moment we may exert our will-power and sustain it till our purpose is accomplished. The greater our understanding of the deeper values of life, the more we as Egos are

[48] Ephesians 4:29

inspired to train our wills to respond promptly to our reasoned decisions. Its neglect is on the path to destruction; its cultivation to the opening up of wide horizons of supreme development.

All day long there is the ever-present necessity of exercising the will. Anyone can exert his will *if he elects to do so.* The extent to which he elects to exert his will-power depends upon the thoughts he has harbored, upon his point of view, his judgment, his degree of intelligence, his moral stature, and the habits he has contracted. He benefits enormously who has formed habits of self-control. Many acts that in the past required attention and exertion are performed automatically and leave a person free to acquire additional habits of strength.

The human will is not limited in the exercise of its power to the development of the character, but is an immense force applied to all conditions that arise in life. It affects the environment; potentially within the will is its power over matter. So-called miracles are under a higher law than we recognize at this stage of our evolution. As Balzac says of Louis Lambert: "A logical and simple deduction of the principles he had observed showed him that Will could by a movement set going solely by the inward being, accumulate itself, and, by another movement, be impelled outward, and even be imparted to material objects."

As we proceed, we will find it held that each human being is placed where he is because of causes set in motion long ago by his own Ego thru a working out of the law of Cause and Effect. There are certain happenings due every one—the reasons for which we will go into later—but how any individual reacts to them and to his surroundings depends upon himself. I may live above the lake which is our only possible water supply. I know that water seeks only its own level; I know it cannot flow up my hill; I

therefore might fold my hands in despair and weep, but I do not. The condition being what it is, I make use of other laws, and have this water pumped into our kitchen. And thus in our lives we meet difficult situations steadily resolved to exert our wills; and we surmount and rise above them or change them. "What we strongly will to possess comes to us in due season" if we falter not thru the years. This does not mean what we occasionally will to possess, nor hope to have, but it means that upon which we unfailingly continue to impress the concentrated will.

This concentrated focused will is God's power used by man; he has access to it thru the Father within. O come to the realization that will-power is one of the driving powers of existence! In its fullness of growth, it is all potent, all creative. It is the dynamo of soul machinery; it propels, pushes; it accomplishes specific, selected ends.

"The weakness of the will," said the great Emerson, "begins when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims, in some one particular, to let the Great Soul have its way thru us; in other words, to obey."

If I choose to give to my needy neighbor, it is my choice, and it is my will that executes the choice; but by so doing, I let the Great Soul have His way thru me. If I divert the stream of force to my own selfish ends at cross purpose with God's ultimate plan, I will to my own final undoing. Nations have diverged from the design of God's willing; they have been destroyed and new nations brought to trial. So long as our choice coincides with the constantly advancing unfoldment of the human family, that is the Supreme will for us, and we, as individual agents, hasten the final good for all.

## XXV

# COÖPERATION IN THE EXERCISE OF INITIATIVE

MY grandmother-in-law used to say, "What's got to be done may as well be done at once." A disagreeable duty looms up before us. Immediately, let us brace ourselves to the exercise of initiative will. If we want to coöperate with the Supreme Plan in living our lives, we will go off alone and think—concentrate our whole mental force on the problem and its ideal solution. With no thought of preference, with thought only of right, we draw upon our wisdom. *Having arrived at the ideal line of action, let us not hesitate, let us not postpone, but let us act at once! Otherwise we feed a forceless habit of dread.* We have all experienced it; it makes us even physically weak. The task grows more and more distasteful—out of all proportion to the thing to be done. The imagination conjures up difficulties which serve no purpose; to the contrary, they tend to attract them. The first approach of apprehension—that insidious visitor—is the moment to take ourselves in hand. If it is something that requires later action, we must prepare, must educate ourselves. This is done by persistently repeated affirmations that we will to do it, that we can do it, and that we intend to do it! Every twinge of disquietude can be conquered by the will, and the situation cleared by prompt initiative. This is the method whereby we overcome anxiety and dread—by the substitution of initiative will. "Stronger than woe is will."

Creative ideas come to everyone; they come as intuitions—suggestions of excellent things that one might do. At their inception, one person lets them flit in and out; another gives them only enough thought to discard them as impossible air-castles; while the third encourages them as possibilities. To him they are the starting point for thought, vision, and immediate activity. The first is he who hangs back, weak in initiative; the last is the one who starts things, who has the courage of initiative.

*Initiative will*—the power to make an instant beginning started independently from within the man. Two men closely equal in ability, brought up side by side, educated in identical schools under the same teachers go out into the world. One is successful, really successful, does big things in a big way—not necessarily in terms of money earned; the other is a pathetic, plodding failure. In the beginning, when he was twenty, the unsuccessful man had started wrong. At a time when he should have had faith and vision, he acquired the habit of creating for himself unsurmountable obstacles. Ignorant of his potential divinity, and of the inner reservoir of reserve force, he never started anything, his power of initiative lay dormant, unaroused. For the inequalities which exist between his condition and that of the man who acts with courageous initiative, he blames fate.

A proverb is a truth so well seasoned, so well understood, that it slips into a concise form of expression. The Spanish people have a proverb:

"God sends thread to a web begun."

Start to write a letter, a composition, to make a hat, to design a house, and from the Great Reservoir of All-Knowledge the ideas come as the work proceeds. A man sees the need of a large hospital in his city; he has vision and is used to pushing his plans thru. His neighbor is aghast at his sugges-

tion! "We cannot get the money to build it, nor the money to sustain it, nor . . ." "Wait, wait, till we get to that!" And the man who does things repulses the suggestion of limitations. Nothing was ever accomplished without first the idea, then the elaborated vision, followed by the necessary time to bring the ideal into visible existence. Every man has within him this reservoir of reserve wisdom and force. As we are told in Virgil of the building of Troy—"They were able because they seemed to be able."

All men and women with creative imagination know that the first step is to visualize the project; the second, to begin to weave whatever thread there is at hand. But one must hold fast to the vision, he must exert his initiative will, use his best judgment, all his powers, and then—Nature changes one after another seemingly worthless threads into those of appropriate quality and color and provides all others necessary for the finished product.

An American sculptor of Danish birth was asked to make models of small insects which were to be enlarged to an enormous size. She had never seen such a model—only some remnants of one at the Smithsonian Institution. She told me that she had not the remotest idea how to go at it, nor what materials to use; but she is one of the good sports in this game of life, and said, "I will do it." And she did do it! Most of her ideas came from the Spirit directly within herself. The enlarged antennae of the insects had to be made of such material as to reproduce the appearance of the tiny ones seen under the microscope, and the wings had to be copied in grosser fabric without varying in the appearance of their texture. Always, always pondering and thinking, using the threads at hand, before the important moment arrived, God sent the materials of perfected selection. Always, too, they

came along natural paths, those always used by the psychical forces whether set going consciously or unconsciously.

She said that the greatest obstacle, perhaps, that she had encountered, was to reproduce exactly a stem of wheat which in its enlarged size was to measure four inches in diameter. Nothing that she could find had the identical appearance of the natural stem. Just before the zenith of her necessity, she had a letter from a friend in California written on Chinese wood paper. Perfect material! She sent up to New York for it. She used as a foundation, a ribbed China silk—the effect was exact! She had her perfect enlarged stem of wheat. "God sends threads to a web begun."

A man I know recently made up his mind to have a tulip farm. He spent the autumn and winter thinking and planning for it. He pictured the farm and planned its layout; he called up the real estate men and got prices; he continuously held the dogged determination to go into business for himself. When he found just what he wanted, he had exhausted his thread—he now needed the money. At the psychological moment, from out of the unknown, a man appeared with some money which he wanted to invest in this sort of project, and he matched his cash against the experience of my friend. This was a case in which all psychical laws were obeyed that led up to so happy a conclusion. I know him well. I wish him God-speed in developing greater and greater power to gather in his needed threads.

Anyone who limits his activities to what he is sure he can do, never taps the unseen reservoir of his inner forces. If it is only just a little beyond that which is to him a known and tried field, and if he then undertakes it, he will grow in ability and power. But a human being to increase in ability and to tap his reserve powers must undertake hard

tasks; and they provide an open sesame to the world of larger issues.

We give birth to increased power only thru labored exertion. The exercise of all our conscious faculties to their limit precedes the finding within ourselves and in the external world the threads we must have. It is then that we are astonished at our resource and reserve force. We never know that we cannot do a thing or that we can till we have tried; even the trial itself adds to our strength. It is the man who does not limit his undertakings who makes strides in the increase of soul stature. He advances with each new adventure; he handles the obstacles one by one as they appear and in leaps grows thereby. A life planned for rapid soul progress means a perpetual battle with one's self and surrounding conditions; but the vision must be clear, and the determination sustained.

It is as plainly one's moral duty, or at best one's privilege, to exert the courage of initiative as to tell the truth. The maximum status of any human being cannot be realized when he lacks in vision and lacks the will to remove obstructions from the path of the vision manifest. The extent of hidden resources is revealed only when thru sheer exertion of the will one takes that initial step to push thru his own inertia. He never knows how divine he is till he conforms to the law of progress that urges on to the further exercise of initiative will.

## XXVI

## COÖPERATION THRU FAITH

IT was about three in the morning. All was dark and still as I stood at the window of the hotel on the hill overlooking Wilmington, Delaware. I saw thru the screened windows, dotted over the city, huge street lights like small moons throwing their rays outward and up—bursts of light embosomed in the darkness. They symbolized that holy thing—Faith.

Faith is a conviction of something beyond; it is a conviction that comes by the way of the Inner Spirit. It is a quality to be approached with reverence, for in it there is a meeting of the conscious soul with the Highest.

We think and are conscious on the plane of the soul. Faith is on this plane but has its source in the higher—Spirit. It is of the Spirit and that is why, appearances to the contrary, faith is a conviction that what has not happened in the visible world will come to pass. Faith is a creative power that sets in motion forces in the spiritual realm and accomplishes actual visible results in the physical world.

Will-power is dynamic and is a part of the equipment that relates us to God. Will issues from the Ego, manifests itself outward and impresses itself on everything that is tuned to respond to its vibrations. Faith, the companion of Will, issues from the Ego, manifests itself outward, and pulls back to itself all that is capable of harmonizing with it.

That the prayer of faith shall save the sick is only one manifestation. There are those " Who thru faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness,

obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.''[49]

And as Miss Cady says in her incomparable chapter on '' Faith,'' in '' Lessons in Truth ''—'' Is there any power or anything greater that you want in your life? . . . Even if your desires exceed this, you need not despair or hesitate to claim their fulfillment, for One greater than I, one who knew whereof he spoke, said, ' To him who believeth *all things* are possible.' ''

After Mr. Huyler, the well known confectioner, died, this story of his connection with the Bowery Mission was published: In the chapel, two heart-sick men knelt in prayer. Their lives were dedicated to the regeneration of the human derelicts of a great city—to the '' down-and-outs '' of society. The money to continue their work was gone; they had been unsuccessful in raising more; to-morrow the work must be discontinued. They made a last fervent and desperate appeal and in utter abandonment of self they asked God to bring them help. The door opened and in walked Mr. Huyler. In passing the building he had obeyed a sudden impulse to go in and look around. His interest was instantly aroused, and from that day to the day of his death he financed the mission.

The unseen forces that faith sets in motion were at work; they had been at work previous to Mr. Huyler's passing for there he was at the psychological moment. His was the soul tuned to the vibrations sent forth in vitalized prayer. '' Before they call I will answer,'' said the Lord.[50]

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[49] Hebrews 11 :33—35
[50] Isaiah 65 :24

To the centurion whose servant Jesus had cured, he said: " . . . as thou hast believed so be it done unto thee."[51] To the blind man he had made to see, " according to your faith be it unto you."[52] To others he had said, " And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive."[53] " If thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believeth."[54]

You who had faith and nothing came of it, are you sure that you fulfilled the conditions? If you make bread you must put something into it to make it rise; that is one of the conditions. Did your faith waver? Nothing is promised to a wavering faith. Did you call simple expectation—faith? Expectation lacks the force and vitality of confident faith. Did you merely hope, and call that faith? Hope leads to faith, but it is not faith. It is wanting in its conviction, its depth, its power. Faith is governed by law with the same precision as the mechanism of an aeroplane. It is not a passive acceptance that the thing may come, not a hope, but a feeling of certainty.

At one time I had a significant and exact answer to a special prayer for light. My father-in-law handed me an ancient book of sermons he had just found stored in a barrel in the old barn of the homestead of his forbears. As I turned the pages, the first sentence that my eye lighted on was the specific answer to a very definite petition I had put three minutes before.

The sermons were preached one hundred years ago. They had been published after the death of their author, Elijah Parish, in 1825. The great truths of nature are confined to no period of time

[51] Matthew 8:13
[52] Matthew 9:29
[53] Matthew 21:22
[54] Mark 9:23

nor people. Faith is a living, vibrant power, active always, wherever its conditions are fulfilled. In all centuries truth has been revealed to the soul who seeks with all the character it possesses. Seeking is a necessary preliminary to finding.

It was evident that Elijah Parish had learned and experienced personally the power of faith in his own life. He tried to impress its significance upon his congregation, to convince them of the marvel of its ever present help, its reality, its beneficence in every day living, its power to lift us out of every difficulty. It is probable that most of them who had ears to hear, heard not. It is probable that his words touched as lightly as thistle down. Some few heard and comprehended the message.

His views on faith contain verification of experiences. They are experiences extending over a period of years that have come to many of us. This is the truth! Advantages physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual are derived from faith. All who know this are only too eager to share its benefits.

The Reverend Elijah Parish told his people that there are two kinds of faith, (1) Faith in one's salvation, (2) "Faith in numerous other favors" in particular, or in the general promises made by the Lord.

"A general promise is just as binding on the part of God and gives as strong a claim on the part of the creature as a particular promise." "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will do it for you," is a ground of as strong confidence, whatever be desired, as the particular promise, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." We rest on the general promise.

"'When two blind men cry, 'Son of David, have mercy upon us,' Jesus says to them, 'Believe ye that I am able to do this?' they must have a particular faith for the particular favor which they ask.

They had this faith and their eyes were opened . . . Thus a particular faith is necessary to ensure a particular favor."

He quotes from Cotton Mather who also calls this a " particular faith." " This particular faith is not the attainment of every Christian," and Mr. Parish goes on to say, " A man may have faith for the salvation of his soul and yet have no faith as to some particular favor which he desires. *This is probably the reason that Good men suffer so much and enjoy so little!* " (The italics are mine.) " As to these things they are weak as other men; they have no faith. In such case their saving faith gives no security of obtaining these favors of Providence, their faith does not extend to them; how can it have any influence in securing them? "

" To show that this is neither new nor rash," said this man, over one hundred years ago, " I quote Dr. Edwards of England, who, more than a century ago, said, ' pray with constancy and perseverance.' "

And at another point he wrote, " Possibly it may be objected to this opinion that it is new. This I do not think is perfectly just. If you read the addresses made to benevolent corporations of the day, many of them assert my doctrine. If you will read the divines of the present or past ages, tho I do not say that they systematically support my opinion, yet I do say that they do assert the same doctrine. I will give a single instance from Dr. Edwards whom Dr. Kippis calls the St. Paul and Augustine of his age. " Prayer mightily prevails with God, and, if I may so speak with reverence, forces and extorts mercy from him."

" It Is Therefore the Religious Duty of Christians Not Only to Believe or Exercise Faith But to Learn Its Benefits. In Gospel Faith God Proposes a Benefit as Well as a Duty. Those, Therefore, Who Stop at the Duty Without a Distinct

View of the Blessings Rob Themselves of Immense Privileges and Consolations. If there be other blessings besides salvation, it is important, according to the value of those blessings, that they be distinctly ascertained . . . So a person may be a believer, but not knowing all the advantages of faith, he may lose vast comforts and blessings. Like Jacob he may believe that God will spread his table with plenty and prosper his journey through life."

And let us listen to the voice of Balzac as he says, " From thy couch—the position of physical relaxation—to the frontiers of the world there are but two steps: Will—Faith."[55]

Will—Faith—the secret of the accomplishment of the great men on earth, our supermen! Our faith has the power to smooth the rough ways of daily living, to assuage anxieties, to encourage, to inspire to great effort. Its potency is not generally recognized; it is not acquired with small exertion. Faith is not related to lip service, nor is it an external thing, nor a superficial expression, it belongs to the deeps of nature. It is not a pianissimo whisper but a tone of resonant beauty. It is an absorbing inner state that requires all the length, breadth, depth, and height of one's whole being. How could it be otherwise? It is a power, a vital, throbbing, psychic force. It is a dignified, transcendent quality, and, like love, has the nature of sunshine and the beauty of a sparkling gem. Faith is a jewelled chain that connects the conscious soul with Spirit. " This is the victory that overcometh the world—

Even Our Faith."

[55] Balzac in *Seraphita*

## XXVII

## COÖPERATION THRU PRAYER

A VIVID realization of what we are as human beings is necessary if we are to comprehend and get the greatest value from prayer. We need to recall that at our center we are Spirit, that Spirit is enclosed in matter for a purpose—growth. We must bear it in mind that the soul of man can reflect only so much of the divinity of the Inner Spirit as it fits itself to receive and that as we purify ourselves, we prepare the way for the incoming. When we feel this truth—realize our direct relation to our Spiritual Source—we have the foundation for prayer.

An inlet of a lake is a part of the whole; all of the water whether it is an inlet or in the open *is* the lake. Considered as an inlet, it is that part of the water bounded by the indentations of land that make it an inlet. Nothing separates it from the whole—no breakwater, no barrier of any kind. This inlet is your individual Spirit—close to and a part of All-Spirit. That much of the Whole is the permanent you, and no wall rises above the water to cut you off from the Whole—God. A clear, unobstructed way of communication exists between you and your Divine Father.

A man who prays shuts off his consciousness from his physical surroundings, directs his attention to the silence within—thru his own inner being, by way of his own Divine Spark—to the God-head of Whom he is an offspring. That is prayer; a formulated or unformulated uplifting of the soul to the Supreme Being. " Prayer links the soul to God, with Whom

we unite as the root of the tree unites with the soil.'"[56]

Sincere prayer—whether it be petition, exhortation, or an outpouring of the soul in thanksgiving and joy, worship, or adoration—is in all cases a lifting up of the human soul, thru its own Spirit to All-Spirit.

Great men, the less great, the humble, uncounted masses, have prayed in all centuries. Jesus prayed, and his disciples, and the prophets of old. Why did they pray?

No intellectual acumen penetrates spiritual secrets. Spiritual laws deal with spiritual verities, and that is why they are not demonstrable on the physical plane. Knowledge of things of the Spirit come thru inner experience. It is a common error to deny the reality of everything that transcends what one has lived thru himself. We must not forget that we are millions of souls and that there are no two of us with the same perception of fact, no two at the identical stage of development. We must therefore open our minds to the testimony of those whose spiritual stature commands our respect. The prophets of old taught us thru example and precept to pray. Let us see:

" Moses and Aaron among his priests and Samuel among them that call upon His name; they called upon the Lord and He answered them."[57]

David addressed God as " O Thou that hearest prayer! "

In Isaiah it is written, " Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry and He shall say, ' Here I am.' "[58]

Shall we take the testimony of the prophets in the matter of prayer?

In the Nazarene's recital of a certain parable, the

[56] Balzac in *Seraphita* [57] Psalms 99 :6 [58] Isaiah 58 :9

beggar Lazarus was fed from the crumbs that fell from the table of the rich man. Eventually they both died. Lazarus lay on the bosom of Abraham in heaven. The rich man in hell cried out in anguish to Abraham and Lazarus to come and help him. The unhappy man was told that an impassable gulf lay between them, and that they could not go over to him if they would. Then said the rich man, "I pray thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them lest they also come to this place of torment." Abraham reminded him that his family had Moses and the prophets whom they might hear. "Nay," he replied, "*but if one went to them from the dead, they would repent.*"[59]

And this is the climax of the parable of Jesus:

"If They Hear Not Moses and the Prophets Neither Will They be Persuaded Tho One Rose From the Dead."

True enough! Today if one rose from the dead to testify, the world would say that he never had been actually dead.

Shall we accept the testimony of the disciples who were taught by the greatest authority in spiritual knowledge? They advise us to pray and to pray constantly.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."[60]

"Continuing in constant prayer."[61]

Shall we accept the testimony of our Supreme Spiritual Leader—Jesus?

"And Jesus himself spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."[62] This is not idle advice for behind it is

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[59] Luke 16:30
[60] Ephesians 6:18
[61] Romans 12:12
[62] Luke 18:1

the working of law. " Watch ye therefore," he said, " and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man."[63] The Master had access to this as scientific knowledge. He wanted us to know it, to benefit by it. He was compassionate for the ills that bowed down his people and gave up his life that he might show them the way that leads thru peace and happiness to the goal of living. He even now yearns, I believe, to lead us to complete understanding as he yearned on earth in an earthly body in days gone by: " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! "[64] The infinite pathos in " and ye would not! " Many have wanted to accept this testimony, but lack confidence in prayer because their own have remained unanswered. Even if the conditions for success have not been fulfilled—in the very act of prayer, a turning of the soul inward toward the indwelling Spirit creates a stirring toward greater harmony with the more exalted side of existence. Its effects therefore are well worth the effort.

But you may say that you offered two prayers and that as far as visible results go, the first was apparently ignored, while the second was followed by so swift and ideal a response as to seem a miracle. Wherein lay the difference?

In the first, there was desire, hope, but you were not aroused to the core of your being; in the second, there was passionate appeal, vital feeling—concentrated—one-pointed. These were poured into the expression of desire. Simple words spoken do not

[63] Luke 21:36 [64] Matthew 23:37

constitute a vitalized prayer. The inexperienced in psychical values think prayer purely beneficial because of its reaction upon the soul. In true prayer there is always a reaction, but there is more—there is response. It comes only after the soul has done its utmost and then relaxed. Relaxation is followed by an influx of Spirit, and its forces come only after the petitioner has finished his labors. It comes in the end when the soul's intensity is replaced with trustful passivity.

As one tuning fork must be in harmony with the second to bring forth response, so the soul must be in the proper state to send forth vibrations in harmony with the unchanging note of pure Spirit. It is the business of each to key his own soul to the required pitch. "The Lord is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous."[65] The soul of the wicked is a tuning fork which bears no harmonious relationship to that of Pure Spirit. One can boil water quite as readily by holding the kettle on the hand as to get into touch with the Inner Spirit while in a destructive state of mind. For it is a condition in which discordant vibrations exist between the soul and its Source. When the laws that underlie prayer are fulfilled the response may be instantaneous or it may be in months or in years. The seed is sown, the soil fertile, and since the conditions have been observed, the harvest is assured.

But let us consider some laws governing successful prayer.

A soul tinged with resentment and unforgiveness interferes with answered prayer. "And when ye stand praying, *forgive,* if ye have aught against any."[66] But someone does not deserve our forgiveness. That is not our concern, ours is in the act of forgiving. Peter asked Jesus if he should forgive

[65] Proverbs 15:29 [66] Mark 11:25

his brother as many as seven times, and he received this reply, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

We must indulge in no self-deception; we must look facts in the face for hypocrites may expect nothing from prayer. "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him *in truth.*"[67]

We must banish every tinge of anger before we pray. Otherwise it is impossible to make any connection with our indwelling Guide. "I will therefore, that men pray everywhere . . . without wrath and doubting."[68] Doubt is not permitted; we must hold to our faith. "For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."[69]

Consider this statement of cause and effect:

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you"—if we are living up to the ideals of behavior which are freely given us—"ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."[70] There is no restriction if we fulfill our part of the contract. "And all things which ye ask in prayer *believing,* ye shall receive."[71]

Those who have perseveringly tested these promises, know that the limitations of our success in prayer are in ourselves and not in the principles. Those who accept them in a literal sense have learned thru a cumulative, personal experience that the promises made regarding prayer are demonstrable facts.

A stalwart man—our guest—exclaimed, "Prayer! I frankly state that I am a thoro believer in prayer. I was brought up to pray; I always pray over every

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[67] Psalms 145 :18
[68] I Timothy 2 :8
[69] James 1 :6, 7
[70] Saint John 15 :7
[71] Matthew 21 :22

important step in my life. Invariably I am answered." He waited a moment: "*But you've got to pray with all there is in you; otherwise, it doesn't work.*"

The soul, having been cleared of hindrances to answered prayer, finds the invitation to ask frequent and definite; the form that prayer may take will be suited to all stages of soul growth, to all temperaments, to all ages. The relationship between God and each human being is as closely personal as tho each human being were a single divine offspring.

The truth concerning the value of prayer is borne thru multiple testimony and has been verified over and over again. Those who have learned long to pass along its benefits to those who do not know. The children of men get into unpleasant situations. But think! The right sort of prayer offered in the right frame of mind would lead to the solution of painful difficulties. A woman is engulfed in the ceaseless duties of the household, the nurture of babies, and the care of young children. She finds not one free moment in the day for prayer or for spiritual uplift. And yet, even she could if she but would. There are certain tasks in which the hands are busy, but the thoughts are free. During bed making, for example, she could pray for moments of relaxation for heart and hands. We all know that the more pressed we are with work, we all know that the more tired we get, the less sense we use. With teeth set, we work ahead blindly, doggedly determined to complete our task. Why not leave it until we have taken the rest necessary to regain our poise? "Thou restoreth my soul."

As plainly as an idea can be expressed in words, the Divine Man who knew most about spiritual things admonished us not to worry, not to be anxious: ". . . and take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with . . .

cares of this life.'"[72] And he taught us the remedy which we must adopt with all the understanding there is in us:

"Be careful (full of care) for nothing; but by *prayer* and *thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God.* And the peace (is that not what we all long for?), the peace of God which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds thru Jesus Christ.'"[73]

What an invitation! What a promise! What a tragedy that without any practical realization of this immediate source of help the world goes blundering on. A few scattering, superficial attempts and it is given up. The reward is worth all the sincerity, earnestness, force, concentration, and reverence that is required. How could we expect with anything less to conform to spiritual law—to gain access to the Spirit within! "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.'"[74] And as we are told, "For thru him (Christ) we have both access by one Spirit unto the Father."

The God within is truly a present help in time of trouble and the source of vast happiness. Any human being leading a life in the midst of confusion, whose feeling is aroused to the foundation of his being, who persistently cries for help, will get help. Something happens to relieve the situation. Often one observes simple indications that the law has begun to work in the direction of relief. The act of asking is necessary; some law underlying prayer demands the asking as a preliminary to receiving.

It is a pity that the divine panacea—prayer—is so little understood. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.'"[75]

We are unhappy without knowing why; whatever is the trouble, however we are laden, we are invited

[72] Luke 21:34
[73] Philippians 4:6
[74] John 14:14
[75] Matthew 11:28

to appeal to the Divine Father within. It makes no difference if our trouble is not much as troubles go, if anything weighs us down, we have access within ourselves to the Wisdom of the Supreme Adjuster.

But it must be remembered that a deep inner longing is one form of prayer. The law works when you lie awake at night with your thoughts and feelings focused on the cause of poignant anxiety, upon a dreaded ill. You practically pray for the condition that you fear; you are exercising your powers of concentration, feeling, and faith in a direction diametrically opposed to your true desire. In such a stress of feeling—which is a force—the mind may be immersed in contemplation of the good as if already present. "The act of praying," said Coleridge, "is the very highest energy of which the human mind is capable."

Our capabilities vary so that the sort of prayer offered depends upon the individual. Those who in a spirit of love appeal to the Indwelling Spirit as to an earthly Father of Infinite understanding and tenderness are answered on all planes of their being. There is nothing degrading in asking for needed physical things; there is nothing undignified nor debasing in our contact with the physical world unless we make it so. Recently, I read a translation of an old manuscript which is in the British Museum. It was written in England long ago, about the middle of the fourteenth century, by an "original mystical genius of deep personal experience."

"God forbid that I should depart that which God has coupled, the body and the spirit. For God will be served with body and with soul both together, as seemly is, and will reward man his meed in bliss, both in body and in soul. And in earnest of that meed, sometimes He will enflame the body of devout servants of His here in this life; not once or twice,

but peradventure right oft, and as Him liketh, with wonderful sweetness and comforts.'"[76]

Prayer that conforms to the law is a veritable Aladdin's lamp. One must ask in love and not in selfishness. "If ye ask and receive not, it is because you ask amiss to consume it upon your lusts." The world was made for man and he is heir to its beneficences. It is unthinkable that it is God's will to withhold any good thing from his children—*if they understand and rate physical possessions at their true value.* But ah! This is where the difficulty lies. They are apt to assume in the minds of those who have them, and also in those of misled onlookers, an importance that does not belong to them. This view comes from a distorted vision of the meaning of life. Things possessed assume the first instead of the last place in spiritual, moral, intellectual, and physical verities. Above all and first of all, we have been warned to seek the kingdom of heaven which is within. Nothing else is of equal importance. That leavens the rest, makes one a better citizen, a finer neighbor, a truer friend.

Life teaches this lesson—the futility of being hampered by and encumbered with *things.* They smother and debilitate our forces and absorb valuable hours that might be used to better advantage to the Inner Being. In time, the whole human race will learn this lesson. Meanwhile, woe to him who elects the pursuit of material goods and prays for luxuries of the sense in preference to the permanent possessions of the Spirit!

"Beware how thou seekest this for thyself and that for thyself. I do not say, Seek not; but *beware* how thou seekest.

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[76] *The Cloud of Unknowing.* Written by an unknown author who "took the frame-work of his philosophy from Dionysius the Areopagite, and his psychology from Richard of St. Victor" (Translated by Evelyn Underhill)

" For a soldier who is going to a campaign does not seek what fresh furniture he can carry on his back, but rather what he can leave behind.

" Knowing well that every additional thing which he cannot freely use and handle is an impediment to him.

" So if thou seekest fame or ease or pleasure or aught for thyself, the image of that which thou seekest will come and cling to thee—and thou wilt have to carry it about.

" And the images and powers which thou hast thus evoked will gather round and form for thee a new body—clamoring for sustenance and satisfaction:

" And if thou art not able to discard this image now, thou wilt not be able to discard that body then; but will have to carry it about.

" Beware then lest it become thy grave and thy prison—instead of thy winged abode, and a palace of joy.

" For (over and over again) there is nothing that is evil except because a man has not mastery over it; and there is no good thing that is not evil if it have a mastery over a man:

" And there is no passion or power, or pleasure, or pain, or created thing whatsoever, which is not ultimately for man and for his use—or of which he need be afraid or ashamed.

" The ascetics and the self-indulgent divide things into good and evil, but all are good so soon as they are brought into subjection."[77]

If you do all in your power to accomplish a piece of work which serves a righteous end, which in no way interferes with the rights, comfort and happiness of another—ask! Or, if you are despitefully used—pray for the offender, and the situation will smooth itself out. " Hitherto ye have asked nothing

[77] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

in my name: ask, and ye shall receive that your joy may be full." Isn't the prayer of faith worth cultivating?

Because of our close relationship with God, we are nearer His ever present Consciousness than to our own material bodies. What a privilege!

"And Thou above all:
Thou, gracious presence, sweet enfolding me
Far, far within, touching me nearest of all."[78]

He is our Source; His consciousness is All-Consciousness. No one's communion interferes with that of another. If we are but children in God, the nature of our communion cannot be that of adults; therefore let us purify our hearts and ask for what we want. We are placed on earth by God and there are of necessity earth wants, earth needs, but let us give these only the accent to which they are entitled.

The soul darkens without the constant ministrations of the Spirit; for within the Spirit lies the response to the soul's most poignant need; none can afford to ignore them! Everyone ought daily to make sure of his connection with Spirit. Everyone should for the time being eliminate the personal, turn his thoughts inward to look upward, to worship, to adore, and to praise. Everyone should clear the way for the Divine Life, that ever presses upon the soul, waiting for our action. Such a state of mind, such prayer invites the suffusion of Divine Light into the entire being. Its effects are incalculable.

When the moment comes in which one passionately longs for knowledge of spiritual things—and this is the first in importance—when one's soul cries out for light—at that moment, the Divine Spirit stirs within. Some day, later on, the consciousness awakes to the knowledge of answered prayer. And

[78] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy.*

from that day forward, if the whole nature is vitalized in the quest, there will be a succession of answers.

An answer to a consecrated prayer for the understanding of truth led me to a casual opening of the pages of Emerson to this phrase:

" He who knows that *power is in the soul,* that he is weak only because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere . . . ."

Only the asking soul can fully realize the perfect application and significance of such a response. Help of all sorts, readjustments on the physical plane, different points of view, encouragement, joy—all come in answer to the *right attitude in prayer.*

" O Powerful Goodness! Bountiful Father! Merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what my wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to Thy other children as the only return in my power for Thy continual favors to me."[79]

An earnest appeal, a swift outgoing from a passionate heart—and the connection is made! In moments of discouragement even tho the faith dwindles, for the soul that persists, the day of faithful harvest arrives, and faith waxes strong. And one grows into the knowledge that he is praying " unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us."[80] We learn that the acme of gifts bestowed is spiritual, utterly transcending those on the lower planes. We come to the realization that prayer is the open sesame to inexpressible spiritual experience.

" Grant me, even me my dearest Lord, to know Thee and love Thee, and rejoice in Thee. And, if I cannot do these perfectly in this life, let me at least advance to higher degrees every day,

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[79] Benjamin Franklin

[80] Ephesians 3 :20

till I can come to them in perfection. Let the knowledge of Thee increase in me here, that it may be perfect hereafter: that my joy may be great in itself and full in Thee. I know O God that Thou art a God of truth: O make good Thy gracious promises to me, that my joy may be full. Amen."[81]

As we climb to greater spiritual understanding, our prayers become less and less petitions and our feelings of thanksgiving, adoration, and worship are brought into concrete expression. We create vibrations in harmony with the Eternal Love which is an indwelling Presence; we ascend into a rarer atmosphere. We out-reach, in will and desire, toward Spirit—wordless, without thought, bared of all except the intense reaching for the soul's intimate contact with All-Spirit *at its center,* the contact which is recognized by its kenning of joy unspeakable.

"Tho these things take place in stillness, in silence, without agitation, yet Prayer is all action"; says Balzac in "Seraphita"—"but it is spiritual action, stripped of substantiality, and reduced like the motion of the worlds, to an invisible, pure force. It penetrates everywhere like light: it gives vitality to souls that come beneath its rays, as Nature beneath the sun. It resuscitates virtue, purifies and sanctifies all actions, peoples solitude, and gives a foretaste of eternal joys. When you have once felt the delights of the divine intoxication which comes of this internal travail, then all is yours."

"The Poet utters: the Thinker meditates: the Righteous acts: but he who stands on the borders of the divine World prays: and his prayer is word, thought, action, in one! Yes, prayer includes all, contains all: it completes nature, for it reveals to you the mind within it and its progression. White and shining virgin of all human virtues, ark of the covenant between earth and heaven, tender and

[81] Saint Augustine

strong companion partaking of the lion and the lamb, Prayer! Prayer will give you the key of heaven! Bold and pure as innocence, strong like all that is single and simple, this glorious and invincible Queen rests, nevertheless, on the material world; she takes possession of it; like the sun she clasps it in a circle of light. The universe belongs to him who wills, who knows, who prays; but he must know, he must pray; in a word, he must possess force, wisdom and faith."

## XXVIII

# COÖPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTUITION

I ONCE asked an inventor to describe the psychology of his process of invention.

"When I have a new problem to solve, I think of it thruout my working hours; night and day, as I walk along the street, as I eat; always it is running in my mind. You will be surprised to learn when the solution comes to me—in my sleep! Sometimes in the night the knowledge I seek wakes me up, other times the invention is vividly in my mind upon waking in the morning."

The conscious soul which sleeps is only a part of the whole human being; the higher principle—Spirit—never sleeps. "I desire, I look up," said Emerson, "and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the vision comes." "From some alien energy"—from something beyond the conscious soul it comes—from out of the region of Pure Spirit—All-Knowledge. At the cessation of man's activity, creative power manifests itself. A chemist I know often gets at night when asleep his original ideas on solutions of problems. Sometimes they come directly upon putting his head on the pillow. He leads an overwhelmingly active life with little respite. It is as tho the inner Spirit patiently bides its time and snatches this one moment of inactivity in which to respond to his perpetual and earnest out-reaching. His fervent desire for special points in the solution of his chemical enigmas had sowed seeds for the harvest. During the preoccupations of our strenuous modern life, Spirit does not

force itself upon the attention of the conscious soul. It waits for moments of silence and solitude when Its intuitional message can percolate thru into the quieted consciousness.

Intuition is the instant discernment by the consciousness of the truth known to Spirit. Emerson calls it " the gleam of light that flashes upon the mind from within."

" After many anxious days and sleepless nights in search of a title, it came to Thackeray like a bolt from the blue one night, and he jumped out of bed, saying to himself aloud: I have it! Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair."

A musician wakes from sleep to find new melodies floating in his mind. Some part of his being had heard the harmonies while his physical body lay at rest, and the intuitional music came thru. Poets have sprung from sleep to write the stanzas ringing in their ears, mathematicians to note the steps in clearing up a mathematical puzzle, and scientists to a clear conception of some underlying principle involved in a special experiment. Man's soul, as we have said before, constitutes a connection between the physical body and the Spirit. The higher aspirations and inspirations and intuitions come along an unobstructed channel from God thru man's individual Spirit into his conscious soul. A genius, in his own individual work, is in uninterrupted communication with Universal Spirit. Outward from the center, the Ego finds expression in the physical realm thru the physical organism.

The intuitions that come to any given person are those to which he is attuned, those capable of coördinating with his soul, those, too, that are invited by his preparations. For instance, Samuel Langley, of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, knew the laws underlying mechanics. He had studied physics, and held vividly in his mind the

laws of falling bodies and those governing the resolution of forces. He used his knowledge, his efforts, his time. He thought about mechanical flight; he used all the intelligence he possessed in solving the problems of "Aero dynamics." He attuned himself to the undiscovered knowledge of the principle governing flying. And then the intuition came!

In 1909 one of my sisters who was studying in Munich witnessed a special performance of dancing under hypnotic subjection given before the medical profession. The young woman responded to the will of the hypnotist—interpreted the music and expressed it in appropriate steps and poses. Her exquisite grace and original postures, and her interpretation of the music left the audience spellbound. Between the selections she was left standing in the final position of the dance till the next number began; and yet, for one under her own conscious control, these were impossible attitudes. They apparently defied the laws of gravitation. Now this girl in her present state of development, was incapable of the degree of musical feeling and grace that she had shown. The universal reservoir had been tapped. From somewhere beyond her normal consciousness, flowed this power of musical interpretation. Her will bidden by another *opened the flood gate.*

Man differs from the animal, as we have shown, because he is self-conscious, and is possessed of reason and a free will. This girl was deprived of her free will and was degraded in the scale of created beings. The oftener she is hynotized, the feebler will grow her power of resistance, until, eventually, she will become a puppet whose string is pulled by the hypnotist. This experiment shows the possibility of drawing from the riches of the Spiritual reservoir. Hypnotism works a serious injury and with its ally mediumship is the wrong way of open-

ing up powers and vision of the next planes of life.

But in the process of discovering these facts, it has been disclosed that there is within each individual a reservoir of vast capacities, possibilities, and powers, which, in future ages, are to be awakened by the exercise of a developed will-power.

Every now and then, we see a boy prodigy brought before the public who can answer, almost instantaneously, difficult questions in arithmetic long before they can be calculated by experts. I heard such a young English lad answer a succession of complex mathematical problems. It seemed unbelievable! And yet, the solution is that, for the time being, he has access to the universal reservoir of mathematical verities. Every human being is in some measure a receiver of intuitions. This is true of the spiritually dull as well as the spiritually quickened attuned to receive special knowledge of this complex universe. The frequency and character of the intuitions are dependent upon the status of the individual and upon the attention he gives to this power and the use he makes of it.

Other intuitions are the messages of conscience—conscience—the voice of the Ego speaking to the soul. If intuitions are ignored, they cease to come. This seems to be a condition of the law that controls them, for, as is the case with psychical activities, they, too, are governed by law.

If we want the promptings of the Spirit, we must work for them. This does not mean physical labor necessarily, but exertion in the realm of the soul. It necessitates preparation, special thought, purposeful action. As rapidly as we ourselves make the conditions, however spiritually untutored we may be, the law operates for us. We use all our faculties, delve into our store of knowledge, and concentrate the entire force of our being on reaching the end to be attained. Then we must rest from our labor—

then, and not till then, in the quiet, in the waiting, from beyond the consciousness, "from some alien energy—the vision comes."[82] It is more than an inner response. Seemingly a network of invisible wires in the visible realm starts up influences in the external world and consummates the heart's desire.

In educating the young people of our country, we give them opportunity for mental equipment needed in life's work, but the individual must do the rest. The extraordinary man in college often shines brightly in the outside world because it has taken character to study and to accomplish set tasks. It has taken perseverance, memory, and keen intellectuality—all to be earnestly desired because they advance one in the rank of evolution. But, in addition, besides the intellectual, he has shown moral qualities that push him into accomplishment—that push him into vision, initiative, will, courage, faith, persistent optimism, and a *developed intuition.* The better scholastic equipment, the more successfully the higher characteristics can function. Yet, of the two sets of qualities, there is no question but that the moral are superior to the intellectual.

Why is it then we are so short sighted as to omit in our elementary schools courses in ethics, in civic behavior, and, the most important thing of all, a course in the development of the human character? Why not teach less of their limitations and more of their divine possibilities? Why not teach them that each human being—like a genius—is an outlet for the inner Spirit? Why not teach them what hidden resource, what unsuspected power is stored within the real Self?

Reason has its indispensable place in the progressive growth of the human being, but intuition is instinctive truth independent of reason. It is primary truth that comes from an interior source,

[82] Ralph Waldo Emerson

that comes to the soul with a conclusive conviction. There are illumined moments when intuitions come in a " flash of spiritual insight " that in comparison make any knowledge on the human plane dull and obscure. Intuitions come from the Universal Reservoir of All-Knowledge, All-Love, and Full-Understanding. They gleam forth in truths of music, poetry, and painting. They assert laws and principles in the region of science. Intuitions are from the " kingdom of heaven within," the world of Permanent Reality, the Inner Region which with advancing evolution is gradually unfolding the human into the divine.

## XXIX

# COÖPERATION THRU SEARCH OF SELF

AN endless succession of human beings come into the world and depart—millions, billions, and yet, no two are alike, for no two have had coincident experiences, no two an identical development. Each is unique! Each—even the most lowly—who looks within himself, who searches himself, and expresses his impressions as he finds them there, has something of value to contribute to his fellow men.

Education supplies facts for use as material for reflection. It also should supply the student with data whereby he may increase himself in value physically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. However educators may inspire, they cannot make characters; no one can form the character of any other individual. It is not the man with the college degree who shows necessarily the largest measure of wisdom—wisdom is the fruit of looking within where dwells its Source.

In New England there used to be a type of countryman with a meagre school education noted for his cryptic words, his shrewd understanding, and his good sense. He was a personality because he thought things out for himself. He accepted the opinions and decisions of others only after measuring them up with his own experience, conclusions, and intuitions. He did not ignore the bits of truth which infiltrated into his soul from the region of Spirit. "A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light flashing across his mind from within more than the lustre of bards and sages. Yet

he dismisses without notice the thought because it is his."

The searching of self is properly a definite and pronounced end of any system of education. Our daily business is to grow and increase with every occupation, for only as we grow are we able to render intelligent service. Even in reading a book for recreation, there is an opportunity for looking within to search one's self. Did you enjoy it as a whole or did you not? If you were pleased or if you were displeased—review it mentally and determine why, at what point, and for what reason. If you were thrilled, when and why? How do you, yourself, with no regard to others, rate the various characters? This done, the reader then examines his own reactions—a valuable habit to form. He arrives at an honest and original opinion worthy of expression. Any book worth the time consumed in reading should contribute to one's facility in self-searching. The reader's part played, original ideas—intuitions—dart into the mind, and even a common-placed book will, by this method, contribute to the progress of the individual.

The proper attitude in regard to all experience is to avoid surface comment. Whenever an opinion of anybody or anything is expressed, let it be independent of outside suggestion—one should make his own comparisons, his own deductions. He should abstain from condemnation even if a friend condemns and commendation because the crowd commends. Casual judgments, repetitions of conventional opinions are suicidal to one's progress and usefulness as an original unit of society.

On the porch of the temple at Delphi was inscribed: "Know Thyself," but we can only know ourselves thru search of self. Criticism may hurt but aids us to self-knowledge, and if honestly examined, is beneficial. We ought to discover the

precise truth about our characters; how otherwise are we to improve? We are said to bolt into a company, a rush of words on our lips without looking around to see if we are interrupting. We are said to be disagreeable; we are said to impress our will ruthlessly upon others. We who consider ourselves honest are yet said to be twisters of facts. Or, possibly, we really are self-seekers, or climbers, or those pitiable creatures who are respecters of persons. Well, are we, without excuse or dodging? Let us think over our idiosyncrasies. We must use care against bias for self, care that our own littleness and failings and prejudices do not color the greater issues. How otherwise will Divine Love speak thru our intuitions?

And when we have come into an honest acceptance of our faults, we shall grow into an appreciative reverence for those who have earned a higher degree of evolution. To young and ignorant souls—not always in youthful bodies—their equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, often outweighs respect and reverence where it is due. Let us follow those we reverence, and let us profit by our own intuitional teachings. In the search for self come intimations of the greater Self within. Let us ponder on questions of great moment to humanity, some one of us may be keyed to the note of a perfect solution. An answer may come thru us. "Listening greatly," we may catch the whispers from above.

Each of you who reads this is unique! You are the product of what you have thought and said and done; no other created being has thought and said and done exactly the same. From an inner source your individuality opens up to you the varied intuitions to which you are tuned, the diverse knowledge which you have fitted yourself to receive. Your opinion, your judgment, your wisdom is honestly

yours, if, after diligent, inner search, it wells up within yourself. Others may hold its duplicate—there is no cornering of truth—but it is also fundamentally yours.

"In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time."[83]

[83] Ralph Waldo Emerson

## XXX

## RELIGION

ON the New York stage I twice saw a girl whose face would have been superbly beautiful but that it indicated a lack of intelligence approximating that of a sheep. Her countenance was vacuous, bereft of expression and inner light to an extent which arrested the attention; even her dancing was heavy, ungraceful, and uninspired. She, a threefold being—body, soul, and Spirit—existed with the Spirit unmanifest; for, as a fountain dries when separated from its source, a soul becomes arid when cut off from the Spirit. It is one's Religion that invites and leads to an awareness of the presence of Spirit in the conscious soul.

A man or woman without religion will probably live with the attention almost exclusively on the physical side of existence. One eats without discretion —even greedily—and consistently pursues the pleasures of the flesh; another sells his soul for the possession of things. Some acquire knowledge only for the material benefit expected; others look no further than to the pleasure itself of intellectual pursuit. Even he whose higher ideals incite him to moral improvement misses something; for without religion a human being is like a room on a dark night, wanting in a source of light. If he only knew, by focusing his attention on the search, he could have for the asking floods of illumination—but the quest must be more than sleeve deep.

An habitual drunkard, a drug fiend, a brutal murderer—all in spiritual darkness, ignorant that there is light—even these are not too low to receive its

redeeming influence. There is always the possibility of opening wide the windows of one's soul to Spirit. From the lowest dregs of society to the enlightened individual who loves God and literally loves his neighbor as himself, the Spirit is manifesting itself in differing degrees. All of the God-qualities one permits make their way through the soul and show themselves in the visible world. One ultimate object of religion is to urge forward this uplifting tendency and to teach every one to lead a better life than he is leading at present; and by all laws of science that underlie the soul's evolution, the better he is the happier he will be. And every man who honestly has a religion—and not simply an outer form—is like a room with a southerly exposure in winter; he is in a position to attract warmth and sunshine.

By religion I am not referring to external ceremonies, but to a healthful exercise of one's spiritual nature. There is need, however, of different presentations of truth to meet varied temperaments and mentalities; the simple facts sufficing for some necessitate amplification for others. There are aspects of spiritual realities inspiring to those whose intelligence is ripened by study and meditation that would be unintelligible to the untutored. The surface meaning of many passages in the New Testament—notably in Revelations—does not obviously reveal its contained spiritual wisdom. At whatever stage of growth a person finds himself his religion must appeal to his special grade of intelligence, and to his emotions sufficiently to inspire him to righteous action. The essence of all religions is the same —the search for God—a reaching out for one's Source.

An ardent soul tries to convert those outside his faith because he has found something which he thinks belongs exclusively to his form of religion.

But again, there is no cornering of truth, which, to the earnest seeker of all sects, reveals itself with startling significance, making him aware of the reality of the spiritual. The essential goal, I believe, may be found in all religions.

Now it is the business of all religions to quicken spiritual life and impel one to supreme endeavor in moral, intellectual and physical effort—to work toward perfection on all planes. It should shift the point of view to a superior level and animate the soul with lofty aspirations. It should effect such a change as that brought about after living thru a series of dark, damp, rainy days—thirty in succession—followed by a cool day of unabated, brilliant sunshine. Such transformation represents the illumination of a previously unlighted soul, flushed with the rays of Spirit; and this, as I understand it, should be an outcome of religion. Its office is to teach us to recognize rights, privileges, and welfare of others as identical in importance with our own, and to develop a more inclusive love, greater kindness, forgiveness, and justice. It should flood the soul with sunshine, bring satisfaction and content, and such joy as to inspire to the act of worship, praise and thanksgiving. It should incite us, moreover, in the midst of life's activities, to a constant exercise of all our soul's strength, our love, will, and self-control. It should give courage to undertake what formerly seemed impossible tasks. If there is no struggle for character building—the logical sequence—if it does not translate itself into a progressively ideal daily living, nor accelerate the evolution of the whole human being—a man's religion is a pitiful failure—even, at times, a blasphemy!

All our sparkle and effervescence, expressed no matter where, is that much Spirit allowed to come forth into visible evidence. Real religion in one's heart does this—it invites the glow of love, the

warmth of sympathy, the sweetness of friendship, vivacity, and brightness of laughter and cheer—these and all types of joy have their source at the Fountain Head. A gloomy religion is an anomaly; it is the result of a clogged up channel between the individual and God. The key-note sounded by the holy men of the ages is unalloyed happiness, bliss, rapture, ecstasy. A religion worthy of the name grips the soul, warms the heart, lights the way, and makes for poise, tranquillity and peace.

"Each is not for its own sake;
I say the whole earth, and all the stars in the sky are for Religion's sake.

"I say no man has ever yet been half-devout enough;
None has ever yet adored or worshipped half enough;
None has begun to think how divine he himself is, and how certain the future is.

"I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these States must be their Religion
Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur; (nor character, nor life worthy of the name, without Religion.
Nor land, nor man or woman, without Religion).

"What are you doing young man?
Are you so earnest—so given to literature, science, art, amours?

"These ostensible realities, politics, points?
Your ambition or business, whatever it may be?

"It is well—against such I say not a word—I am their poet also;
But behold! such swiftly subside—burnt up for Religion's sake."[84]

[84] Walt Whitman in *Leaves of Grass*

" It is well said in every sense that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him, a man or a nation of men."

Why Religion? Religion is the main spring of man's temper and quality of thought, his attitude in the discharge of duty, his inspiration to noble living. It colors and refines his whole being; without it he becomes a laggard in the love of God which, Spinoza has said, " is man's only true good." It ministers to man's spiritual needs; it deals with the verities of eternity; in fact, " Religion is the science of eternal life."

# XXXI

## COÖPERATION IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH

THE wireless apparatus in Arlington, Virginia, buzzed, hummed, and crackled with such force that we stopped in amazement to listen. The next morning the newspapers printed the news of the latest German drive and the retreat of the allies. The receiving station had been erected according to the laws that govern the transmission and reception of wireless messages; otherwise, there would have been no messages. Thus it must be with the soul; it must be prepared for the coming of the Spirit. "The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee."[85] But before it is possible to receive even the faint intimation of the presence of the Lord within man—"Who is in the midst of thee"—the soul must be made ready. There are laws which govern man's consciousness of the presence of Spirit and he must conform to those laws.

Fear of any sort, worry in any phase, jealousy do not prepare for the entrance of the Spirit, nor do covetousness and unforgiveness. A soul tainted with lies or harmful gossip excludes Its coming; their presence indicates the absence of God—this is within the spiritual law. The soul must be purified to coordinate with the Pure. All forms of goodness conform to God's plan for growth on the line of the progressive unfolding of the character. It follows that morality is the necessary stairway to spirituality and leads to the realization of spiritual verities. Spirit inspires to fine distinctions in the moral life and is incompatible with immorality. It

[85] Zephaniah 3:15

is the task well done, the duty discharged, the generous deed performed that invite the Supreme into the soul. Each tunes the man to an exact scientific result—contentment, joy, and an abiding sense of uplifted well-being. We all know it; and we know the unrest, dissatisfaction, and irritation that assail our souls when we have transgressed the law of Growth. Peace is the natural outcome of an influx of Spirit—unrest of Its absence. In the one case, it flows into our conscious area as naturally as water runs down hill; in the other case, Spirit is not present, nor does it stream into the soul any more than water runs up hill.

The glow of Spirit suffuses Itself thruout the soul of only the one who has earned it; every human being experiences Its presence to the measure of his deserts. Each, being unlike in point of development, differs as to the degree and frequency of the consciousness of this inner vibrant warmth, and, when it comes, it lifts one up out of the physical and mental heaviness, it revivifies body and soul, and shines forth from the eyes.

The spiritual glow is the forerunner of a definite consciousness of God's presence within vouched for by scores of the more spiritually advanced. John Yepes of the sixteenth century—later called "St. John of the Cross"—experienced such divine sweetness and wrote that altho God is in every soul, He communicates the great transformation only to those whose will is most conformable to the will of God. As has been indicated, this can happen only thru the coöperation of the human being in all departments of his complex nature with God. Nothing but complete consecration of one's will to God can make the man cognizant of His Divine Companion.

Man being definitely related to his Maker—as part to Whole, as son to Father—separation exists only upon the son's breaking a spiritual law. The strug-

gle to keep down the barriers and to maintain one's harmony with All-Spirit is the struggle for spiritual existence. Of what avail are the electric fixtures if the wires become severed from their source of electricity! The attainment of true happiness is determined by the preservation of this connection between the individual and God; consequently, when one feels disturbed, it is because his harmonious relationship with his Source has been disturbed. Everyone recognizes from time to time differences in his own state of being—in his atttitude toward external things, for example. What he has overlooked to-day with tolerance is made the basis of misery to-morrow. This is an inner change. He is out of harmony with the Inner Presence and needs to be tranquilized by regaining the uninterrupted flow of Spiritual Essence into his soul. He needs the poise and serenity that come from a conscious touch with the Spirit; it is the law that this shall be withdrawn when one lapses from vigilant coöperation.

On the physical plane we must eat; consequently, we arrange our lives to get food at stated intervals. How may we arrange regular periods for rest, meditation, and spiritual refreshment? How many know where to obtain suitable material for it? On the spiritual plane we must be spiritually nourished by the inpouring Divine Substance; that is our food on that plane of existence. It is impossible to be a competent, well-composed man or woman without it—and yet it is we ourselves who cut off the supply—an impatient word alone interrupts its flow for a moment.

We prepare by getting our house in order, by forgiving and forgetting our injuries, by filling our hearts with love, by turning our thoughts toward the Supreme Light at our center:

"Lo! the eternal Savior, the sought after of all

the world, dwelling hidden (yet to be disclosed) within each.'"[86]

We approach His Gracious Presence with prayer and thanksgiving—forgetful of self. We hold ourselves expectantly—in an atttitude that invites the influx of Spiritual Essence; for it is with God's spiritual energy that we need to become refreshed. What we seek is called by Brother Lawrence " the practice of the presence of God "—a process of inner up-reaching and concentration in the stillness.

As the Spirit never obtrudes Itself into a soul teeming with thought, nor while engaged in continuous activities, relaxation and stillness are necessary. This process in the *quiet*—it is important to say forcefully—is not that of mental and physical relaxation. *An inert inner* state is dangerous! One must not enter into that passive condition which invites control by an invisible intelligence and leads to mediumship. In a condition of alert tho quiet attention, it would be impossible for an external will to intrude itself—to enter in and take possession temporarily of body and soul.

" The practice of the presence of God " is an exercise by which the soul gains access to spiritual planes; in it one ceases to think and holds himself in an attitude of expectation. Years ago, and with no appreciation at the time of its psychical significance, I chanced upon the method of opening the soul to the higher forces of Spirit. Physically relaxed but *psychically alert,* I closed my eyes, focused them in a fixed position, and, by an effort of the will, stopped thinking. I soon found myself in thought. I started again, refocused my eyes and stopped thinking. Whenever again I became aware that my mind was busily engaged, I repeated the effort to make it blank. After a lapse of time, twenty minutes, let us say, I found myself swimming in a sea of

[86] Edward Carpenter from *After Long Ages* in *Towards Democracy*

restful contemplation. From this tranquil condition I emerged with a spacious sense of poise, serenity, warmth, and cheer, and with a physical well-being not to be duplicated by a night's sleep. I told my friends that in experimenting on a method of inducing sleep, I had discovered a mode of resting that was wonderful. Wonderful indeed! for I had stumbled on a soul process bringing an inflow of spiritual forces.

Whenever we are " keyed up " or out of sorts or critical or unamiable even, it is time for spiritual food. More often than not, it is not the need of physical rest so much as the reestablishment of harmony between human and divine parts. If possible we should go by ourselves where we can shut out the hum of physical activities. We should lie down, relax, stop our flow of thoughts, and wait—psychically alert—for the inflow of Spirit. If this is not feasible, we may learn to withdraw within ourselves, for it is possible to acquire the art of ignoring sounds. It is possible to sit in a chair and pass from a state of irritation to one of renewed and refreshed energy—as tho come forth from a prolonged sleep —at peace with the world. Consequently, when we have lost our first freshness at work, when we see hours of labor ahead and yet cannot leave, we can stop our work and relax. For a few moments we can lift our thoughts in swift and earnest petition, focus our attention on the great Indwelling Tranquillity, and await in receptive silence. In the end we will more than make up the time; we will work more efficiently, and in a contented, unstrained frame of mind.

Have you ever waked in the morning and felt weighed down with a heavy heart—even before you were roused enough to know why? Before you went to sleep, you were tortured by the thought of impending failure in an important undertaking. Have

you, in contrast, awaked with a sense of happiness and buoyancy, and found that you had gone to sleep in the enjoyment of good news? Again, have you ever tossed and turned in your bed at night—worrying, borrowing trouble, fretting and fuming—and waked in the morning limp and spent? Have you, on the contrary, lain awake at night in peace and quiet, your soul filled with prayerful praise and thanksgiving, and felt when you awoke in the morning as if you had had an uninterrupted and exceptionally fine sleep?

The result in each case is the product of your own attitude of mind. Why not then consciously exert a determined will to acquire a state of soul inviting ease and quietude? The old Puritan habit of reading the Bible before going to bed was an act of good psychology; this is true of anything appealing to the individual taste that lifts the thoughts to higher realms—forgetful of self—we need to concentrate our minds on spiritual realities. Profound contemplation of the starry heavens, the Creator, the beauties of His creation; whatever will serve to lift the soul of man to his Source—establishes the bonds of harmony between soul and Spirit.

Our psychical atmosphere in sleep seems, as a rule, to partake of the feelings and thoughts which immediately precede it, unless, thru the day, there has been some unusual stir of the emotions. Just before sleep—that wonder-working moment when the will impressed upon the mind will later regulate its activities—is a precious period for the soul to make demands upon itself. An unswerving habit of spiritual exercise at night completely changes one's outlook upon the beginning of the working day; we grow spiritually if we make the effort, otherwise not.

"But if he would know what the great God speaketh, he must 'go into the closet and shut the

door,' as Jesus said. God will not make Himself manifest to cowards. He must greatly listen to himself, withdrawing himself from the accents of other men's devotions. Their prayers even are hurtful to him till he has made his own. The soul makes no appeal from itself."[87]

If we wish to rise up out of the bondage of the toils of earth, we must serve the Lord with Gladness, come into His presence with singing, enter His gates with thanksgiving and praise.

" Delight thyself in the Lord: and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart . . ."[88] " They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."[89] Morning, noon, and night, one needs spiritual food. After one waits on the Lord in uplifted thought, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, as he relaxes, let him imagine himself encompassed by waves of Spirit as by waves of heat. Let him think of the living Spirit as an intense inner Light that shines forth from his whole being. " Wait on the Lord: be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the Lord."[90]

My youngest sister at the age of twelve said to me, " What is it, what does it mean when I hear music or sit in the moonlight, and my heart becomes full of longing and sad—what is it that I want? "

What is it indeed but the universal cry for the revelation of God within the soul!

Isn't the age-long search for happiness—for the true permanent happiness that comes in no other way—a search for spiritual understanding?

We desire friends, houses, wealth; they do not bring inner peace. We long for a congenial mate; we find that that in itself does not suffice. We use great effort in acquiring knowledge; that brings satisfaction, but there is something more. We begin

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[87] Ralph Waldo Emerson
[88] Psalms 37 :4
[89] Psalms 34 :10
[90] Psalms 27 :14

to understand, to transform our knowledge into wisdom. It seems that we have been " ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of truth."[91] Now we find that beyond those that answer to one's simple needs, worldly possessions fail to bring peace. We see that knowledge must be transmuted into wisdom—the wisdom that leads as straight as an arrow to spiritualities. These permanent possessions of the spirit are, in the long run, the only ones worth having, and the only ones we can take with us when we go. Wisdom teaches that the soul is a fountain that needs from Its Source constant renewal of the Water of Life.

Whatever one's occupation in life, the first search should be for spiritual knowledge and the primary concern should be to coöperate with God for spiritual growth—all else will swing into place. " But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In the seeking, a pervading harmony inundates the soul. It influences thought and behavior; it makes noble rather than ignoble thought and action easy; it incites aspiration and effort for self-control and for ethical perfection; it leads to a gradual inner unfolding, a lifting of the soul for the receipt of sublime perceptions. A continuous, earnest search leads to spiritual evolution.

[91] II Timothy 3 :7

## XXXII

## "YE ARE GODS"

THE Supreme Purpose of Human Life, we have found, must include man's complete coöperation in all departments of his being. It is the law! If we transgress the law we sow trouble for ourselves; if we follow the law, we reap happiness. Following the law, what does this forward movement in man's development portend? What has the future in store for us? From data at our disposal, let us look over the ground of our potential possibilities.

One winter, at the feast of the dedication, Jesus walked in the temple—in Solomon's porch. "Then came the Jews around about him and said, 'If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.'"[92] He answered that he had already told them, but that they had not believed him. And he suggested that the *works* that he did in his Father's name bore witness of Him. "My Father is greater than all," he said, and when he added, "I and my Father are one,"[93] they took up stones to stone him.

He asked for which of his many good works he had shown them from his Father did they stone him. They replied that it was for his blasphemy.

"Is it not written in your law," Jesus inquired, "Ye are Gods"?

Sure enough, as Jesus said, it *is* written in their law—Psalms 82:6—"Ye are Gods; and all of you are children of the Most High."

How many of us realize that we are gods—gods in the making? How many of us realize that often

[92] Saint John 10:24 [93] Saint John 10:30

our limitations are self-imposed! How may of us have so lived that we are aware of that infinite reservoir within upon which we may learn to draw! At our centers we have access to forces beyond calculation—powers that are divine!

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do he shall do also; and greater works than these shall he do."[94] How can we emphasize this heritage? How bring home the significance underlying the fact that the psychical individual—you—is created in the image of God—that you are, in fact, a manifestation of God? Walt Whitman says, you recall:

"No one has begun to think how divine he himself is and how certain the future is."

"The philosophy of six thousand years," said Emerson, "has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experience there has always remained in its last analysis a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Always our being is descending into us from we know not whence."

In the midst of confusion—"here a little and there a little"—we—gods in the making—are slowly unfolding our divine potentialities.

Persistently subjugating our will to the Great Will, steadily coöperating with the Great Plan, we are advancing toward the heights. A summit is in view, it is an ascent into a larger and glorious condition of blissful being, an advanced state of consciousness—Cosmic Consciousness.

[94] Saint John 14:12

# Part Two

## THE DIVINE PLAN

*" There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, Horatio."*

" O Earth, scene of what toil and anguish!
Century after century, thousands thousands of years,
What reek of battles, smoke of vast wilderness-cities,
Going up from age to age, losing itself in the calm immeasurable blue.

O wonderful unutterable secret! the moon gliding through the trees!
The soul of man slowly transforming itself, growing, bursting through the sheaths—the stars looking on!
The new creature born anew, in travail and in suffering ascending into heaven;
Ah! songs and harmonies angelic sounding—ah! joy the mortal frame can scarce sustain! "

*—Edward Carpenter.*

## XXXIII

## COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

EMERSON'S " Oversoul " I read in my youth. I did not know that I did not understand it. Now I am more experienced, and my consciousness has deepened in its realization of inward states and in its realization of the significance of outward facts. As a consequence, this wonderful essay has become laden with meaning; it thrills me with inspiration. That of which we are unconscious does not exist for us; what does the calculus mean to a child of three utterly oblivious of its import?

An infant stretches out his tiny hand to touch the bell hanging from the window-shade six feet away; he is not conscious of the distance between himself and the window. After a sufficient number of experiences, and a consequent lapse of time, he is able to estimate distance—learns distance. To that degree his consciousness expands. He becomes aware, for example, of the lapse of time; he recognizes space and number. The young student who takes a course in botany equips his mind with facts about growing things; as one learns of rocks, insects, birds, and anatomy, his mental state of awareness, with regard to them all, becomes more inclusive. With increased knowledge of mathematics, history, and language, the consciousness with regard to them is intensified.

An artist told me that during periods in which she spent her entire time in painting, she became aware of the subtleties of color hard to express, but which were the result of a very definite expansion over her ordinary power of perception. A real musician

discerns overtones and deeper harmonies which pass unnoticed before the uninitiated.

The average adult arrives at a comparatively stable state of consciousness. It is extended by each item of knowledge, but, let us say, along the same horizontal surface. In the interval between this and the state of consciousness enjoyed by the Spiritual supermen, there are all grades of awareness.

Poets, great religious teachers are in tune with higher spiritual realities that bring to them comprehension of exalted spiritual truths. The consciousness of such human beings has begun to extend into another dimension because they are illuminated by Divine Spirit on higher planes. Consequently each is aware of conditions unknown to the great mass of human beings.

Imagine yourself alone, calm, at peace, suddenly encompassed in an inexpressibly brilliant light. You soon perceive that it is not outside; it is within. Simultaneously, you are suffused with tumultuous happiness, supreme joy, exaltation. It is an experience of an inward ecstasy—indescribable.

These are the signs of the coming of Illumination. These were experienced by Dr. Richard Bucke. They lasted but a few moments, but the effects were ineffaceable. He learned more in those minutes than in years of study, and much that study could not teach. Later, he met a man who had had a like Illumination—but more extended, and who threw light on the meaning of this phenomenon. It enabled Dr. Bucke to perceive the significance of the subjective light seen by Mohammed, by Moses, and by St. Paul; " . . . . . and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven."

Dr. Bucke's short Illumination of higher consciousness (" Cosmic Consciousness " Edward Carpenter named it) led him to gather together the names in history of men whose writings proved that

they had undergone this advanced state of awareness. Without exception, they were men who possessed great earnestness and high moral elevation as will be noted by an examination of a partial list:

Gideon, Isaiah, Lao-tsze, Gautama the Buddha, Socrates, Jesus, Paul, Plotinus, Mohammed, Dante, Shakespeare, Behmen, Pascal, Spinoza, Madam Guyon, Swedenborg, Blake, Thoreau, Emerson, Walt Whitman, Edward Carpenter.

Balzac, who had reached the divine state, named it " Specialism," a term which, in its derivation, accentuates the intellectual illumination that is its characteristic.

Jesus, Balzac said, was a " Specialist " who saw " the deed in its root and in its products; in the past which begot it; in the present where it is manifested; in the future where it develops; his sight penetrated the understanding of others. The perfection of the inner sight gives birth to the gift of specialism. Specialism carries with it intuition. Intuition is a faculty of the inner man, of whom specialism is an attribute . . . The specialist is necessarily the loftiest expression of man—the link which connects the visible to the superior worlds. He acts, he sees, he feels thru his inner being."

The arrival of men at this elevated state of soul is marked by a perfectly definite set of qualities—the same in all. Dr. Bucke gives his list of the marks characteristic of this condition—*Cosmic Consciousness:*

" (a) The subjective light."
" (b) The moral elevation."
" (c) The intellectual illumination."
" (d) The sense of immortality."
" (e) The loss of the fear of death."
" (f) The loss of the sense of sin."
" (g) The suddenness, the instantaneousness, of the awakening."

" (h) The previous character of the man, intellectual, moral, and physical."

" (i) The age of illumination—from about thirty-seven to thirty-nine."

" (j) The added charm to the personality so that men and women are strongly attracted to the person."

" (k) The transfiguration of the subject of the change as seen by others when the cosmic sense is actually present."

It was written of John Yepes:

" His soul was translated into a paradise of interior delights and heavenly sweetness. A certain brightness darted from his countenance on many occasions—especially when he came from the altar or from prayer. It is said that a heavenly light at times shone from his countenance."

Even as memory, thought, and reason accompany the self-conscious stage of evolution, so the foregoing characteristics are peculiar to Cosmic Consciousness. It is a state of soul that knows thru direct spiritual perception, for it transcends thought as we experience it. The more advanced souls become those things which they perceive—" Suddenly I am the Ocean itself: the great soft wind creeps over my face."[95]

When under the spell of this higher consciousness, the soul recognizes within itself, two I am's, the restricted self-conscious self, and the larger universal self—The Higher Self. The self-conscious self is included in the Higher Self, and, as far as it reflects Spirit, is divine. The coming of the Cosmic Sense does not mean that the man has suddenly become perfect or infallible. His instantaneous introduction into an advanced state of consciousness makes him an infant on the new plane. It is on so high a level that in many cases, the Spiritualists fail

[95] Edward Carpenter from *By The Shore* in *Towards Democracy*

in a proper estimate of the nature of man in his self-conscious condition. St. Paul's contempt of the "flesh" may thus be accounted for. But "All things were made by God and without Him was not anything made that was made." Man in his self-conscious stage is as truly God-created as he is in the Cosmic state.

Walt Whitman in his larger understanding said:

"I believe in you my Soul—the other I am must not abase itself to you;
And you must not be abased to the other."

O Thou! whoe'er thou art! understand that Illumination is the day of deliverance! The soul takes on wings and soars. It sparkles with joy and pulsates with throbbing peace passing expression. It is open to all. It comes to every one who fulfills the law. "It comes to the lowly and simple," to the great. It comes tempered to the stage of development of the recipient. But it comes only when the human spirit has persistently and continuously searched after the Divine, only to him who has utterly and abjectly abandoned himself to God and His will.

This I know, for in July, 1910, the great experience was mine. The flood gates of Heaven opened within me, and I was translated into the indescribably glorious state of being. How long in months its effects lasted, I cannot say. In the following March, I came to the realization that I was back on earth.

Whoever undergoes this unutterable experience can never again be quite the same as before. It left me with a profound understanding of the reality of things of the Spirit, with a passion for righteousness that nothing can quench. At the time, I longed to cry out to suffering humanity, to make them understand. I aspire now to bring hope and help to those

who want them. I hope to show that this short span of earth-life is the period of schooling, a time of preparation, a cycle of opportunity for growth, for progress.

We must extract the valuable essence of the lesson learned in living—that it is which prepares for Cosmic Consciousness. Like everything else in the universe, consciousness unfolds, deepens. In the future development of the race, awareness of the life and order of the universe, the *cosmos,* will follow a perfected self-conscious state. As Cosmic Consciousness appears at present, with rare, rare exceptions, it comes for a season and goes. In a swift transformation of the inner life, it bursts upon the soul in majestic splendor. It may last for years, as it undoubtedly did in the case of the Nazarene, or for months, or for seconds. Even a slight initiation—that which Emerson calls " a flash of spiritual insight "—in mental clearness, brilliancy, and authoritativeness, utterly transcends the ordinary state of mind. The accustomed horizon rolls back and reveals beyond a world of transcendent truth. Always it outweighs every other experience on earth. It is the Spiritual—the Transcendent—the Divine expressing Itself thru the Human.

## XXXIV

## ESOTERIC TEACHING

THE state of thrilling happiness—Cosmic Consciousness—is an established fact. Is there any explanation, any evidence of its significance? There is! There is definite, enlightening knowledge of its exact place in the plan for human evolution. Indeed, we must know these facts fully to comprehend the testimony and reference in the writings of "Specialists."

Edward Carpenter was asked to explain just what Cosmic Consciousness is. He replied that the whole of "Towards Democracy"—his greatest work and a masterpiece in this generation—was his attempt to explain this condition of being. But we find for the full understanding of "Towards Democracy" a key is necessary. Is there any such key? There is, but it is not in simple form yet. It is contained in a class of books written since 1880 on hitherto hidden knowledge of things superphysical, psychical, and spiritual. When we hold this key, we understand; it is an open sesame to the comprehension of Balzac's "Seraphita," to Bulwer Lytton's "Zanoni" and "The Strange Story," to Dante's "Divine Comedy." The key reveals underlying meanings and allusions flowing from the intuitive knowledge of great poets and well-known philosophers.

There is a body of knowledge in existence previously accessible only to the few who were fitted to receive it—physically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. I recall in High School days my speculation as to what Pythagoras—in disseminating

knowledge to the masses—was reserving for his few selected disciples. What was the nature of his secret teaching—his esoteric lore? *What is this body of hidden wisdom that has been universally reserved for a few disciples selected by all great religious teachers and philosophers in the West as well as in the East?*

"I will utter things," said Jesus to his disciples, "which have been secret from the foundation of the world."[96] And again:

"It is given unto you to know *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,* but to them it is not given."[97]

"I have yet many things to say to you," he told them, "but ye cannot bear them now."[98]

Thus said Isaiah the Prophet: "I have showed thee new things from this time, *even hidden things,* and thou didst not know them."[99]

In De Quincey's "Secret Societies" it is written:

"Josephus fancies himself to have learned all, whilst, in fact, there were secret, esoteric classes which he had not so much as suspected to exist."

And Grote says of Aristotle:

"There grew up in the mind of some commentators, a supposition of '*exoteric*' doctrine as denoting what Aristotle promulgated in public, contrasted with another secret or mystic doctrine reserved for a special few, and denoted by the term '*esoteric*' . . . I believe the supposition of a double doctrine to be mistaken in regard to Aristotle; but it is true as to the Pythagoreans and not without some color of truth even to Plato."

And Origen in one of his books says:

"He divided his disciples into two classes, the one called esoteric and the other exoteric. For to those he entrusted the more perfect and sublime

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[96] Matthew 13:35
[97] Matthew 13:11
[98] Saint John 16:12
[99] Isaiah 48:6

doctrines: to these he delivered the more vulgar and popular."

*What is the source of this hidden knowledge? None other than the truths experienced in an expanded consciousness due to the unfoldment of man's inner life—due to the unfoldment of man's inner life!*

It was undoubtedly the intention of Jesus to introduce this ancient body of hidden wisdom to the Western world. We find the teaching of "The Mysteries" in the early Christian church an established fact.[100] "The Lesser Mysteries" were taught in preparation for "The Greater Mysteries." *"The Gnosis" included these Mysteries and was the hidden knowledge of spiritual things held by the Gnostics.* The Gnostics were members of a society established in the Christian church in the first century, "which flourished in the second century, and had almost disappeared by the sixth century."[101] The disappearance of the Gnosis was due to the fact that there were no applicants worthy to be taught; this knowledge has always been held too sacred for profane handling. Definite predictions that *the Gnosis should become reëstablished and understood may be found as far back as the later middle age.*

Take note of what happened—these predictions came true!

In 1876, in England, a man and woman in search of divine truth—all that they had, and were, dedicated and consecrated to the quest—underwent an inner unfoldment. It consisted of an inward purification followed by a development of new faculties and capacities and powers—mental, moral, and spiritual. They believed they had made a momen-

[100] Scholarly elaboration of this subject is to be found in *Esoteric Christianity* by Annie Besant

[101] Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*

tous discovery; and lo! *they found it to be a recovery of the Divine Gnosis!*

"The time came when the veil was withdrawn, and the secrets of the beyond were disclosed to us in plentitude."[102] To them was vouchsafed "the restoration of the faculty of inward understanding and of the divine knowledge which only thru it are possible."

During the summer of 1881, Anna Kingsford, M. D., of the Faculty of Paris, and Edward Maitland delivered their first lectures on their experimental knowledge of spiritual truths. These were published the following winter in "*The Perfect Way or The Finding of the Christ.*" And of this book a pupil of the Abbé Constant wrote: "They are in complete accord with all mystical traditions . . . In this book we find all there is of truth in the Kabala supplemented by new intuitions, such as present a body of doctrines homogeneous, logical, and inexpugnable."

Before this time, H. P. Blavatsky—a Russian woman who had been an Initiate in India—had dealt with the "Mysteries" in her book "Isis Unveiled," published in 1875. Within two years of the commencement of the collaboration of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, another collaboration of equal importance—that of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge—had begun. Their attention was focused on conquering the hidden wisdom of the religions of the East. H. P. Blavatsky was a woman of extraordinary mental capacity and under esoteric teaching in India became an expert in occult investigation. In 1888 she published two large volumes of Secret Doctrine—a stupendous work! Before she died she had two more volumes nearly completed. Whether the public were to receive these two was

[102] Edward Maitland in *The Story of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland and of The New Gospel of Interpretation*

to depend upon the reception and absorption of the first two. They have never yet been published. After her death a third volume was published containing letters and various writings, but it is not Blavatsky's original third volume.

Neither set of collaborators knew of the work of the other. Yet both were accumulating knowledge of the superphysical worlds—this more thoroly in the case of Blavatsky and Judge. Both were undergoing psychical and spiritual evolution—the basis of esoteric wisdom of all ages. Both were preparing for a colossal world-wide movement—the awakening of spiritual understanding. *Thus did the prophecy come true in full measure!*

It has been known for generations that it is in the East that they have specialized on the evolution of the inner man.

"Lo! the divine East from ages and ages back intact her priceless jewel of thought—the germ of democracy—bringing down! (Gentle and venerable India well pleased now at last to hear fulfilled the words of her ancient sages.)"[103]

"Light has so often emanated from the East," wrote George Frederick Parsons, "that the West has long ceased to give credit for its benefits."

In "Germany and England," written before the World's tragic War, Mr. Cramb said that in India they were masters of religion. He called India the "Italy of Asia." "Why India," he quoted, "India *is* religion!"

Six centuries before Jesus of Nazareth, the Buddha taught esoteric doctrine in India; and even then a secret teaching had been handed down for centuries from teacher to pupil by word of mouth.

Edward Carpenter had many years ago introductions in India which brought him in close touch with

[103] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

their traditional teaching—an opportunity seldom enjoyed by an Englishman. There he met philosophers who had developed a higher consciousness—Gurus and Gñánis who had in the course of their evolution developed higher powers.

In an account of his journey "From Adam's Peak to Elephenta," he writes that two facts appear to him practically certain:

"(1) That in every age of the world and in almost every century, there has been a body of doctrine handed down which, with whatever variations and obscurations, has clustered round two or three central ideas, of which, perhaps, that of emancipation from self thru repeated births is the most important: so that there has been a kind of a tacit understanding and free-masonry on this subject between the great teachers thruout history—from the Eastern sages, down thru Pythagoras, Plato, Paul, the Gnostic Schools, the great mediaeval alchemists, the German mystics and others, to the great philosophers and poets of our time; and that thousands of individuals on reaching a certain stage of evolution have corroborated and are constantly corroborating, from their own experience, the main parts of this doctrine; and

"(2) That there must have existed in India, or in some neighboring region from which India drew its tradition, *before all history,* teachers who saw these occult facts and understood them well, probably better than the teacher of historical times, and who had themselves reached a stage of evolution at least equal to any that has been attained since.

"If, however, any one should seek it for the advantage or the glory to himself for added powers and faculties, his quest will be in vain, for it is an absolute condition of attainment that all action for self as distinct from others shall entirely cease.

"Perhaps I have said enough now to show—what

was, of course, sufficiently evident to me—that there was some reality beneath all these—some body of experience of no little value and importance which has been attained in India by a portion at any rate of those who have claimed it, and which has been handed down through a vast number of centuries among the Hindu peoples as their most cherished possession."

The knowledge was cherished because misused by the ignorant, weak, or wicked, for it held possibilities for great harm. Whatever had been published of the superphysical realms, and of scientific, mental, moral, and spiritual evolution, had been purposely obscured by the transposition of letters and words. It had been impossible for scholars to decipher even with approximate accuracy the inner meanings and significance of the symbolic terms used. Incorrect interpretations have been due to this, and untruths of Eastern religions have been taught as facts.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett—one of the pioneers in bringing Eastern lore to the Western world—writes that in the latter part of the last century there was an experiment in process in India. The adepts were eager to see if ordinary culture " had attained a stage at which it would appreciate a flood of new thought relating to a science loftier than any dealing exclusively with phenomena perceptible to the physical senses." He himself had received in India teachings given in response to his own questions. He gave these to the public in 1883 in his first book—" Esoteric Buddhism." He now refers to this book as but a forecast of occult teaching, crude and incomplete. However, it excited interest and a notable following, and undoubtedly paved the way for the reception of " The Secret Doctrine."

To give to the world their hitherto closely guarded, sacred wisdom was to many Initiates of the East a desecration, and up to the time of the arrival of

"The Perfect Way" in India, the Masters had given "a very meager installment of their doctrine. *The Masters declared that the writers of 'The Perfect Way' had obtained from original and independent sources, a system of doctrine substantially identical with that of which they had for ages been, as they supposed, in exclusive possession, but had never been permitted to divulge, as it had always been reserved for Initiates.*"[104] They have always longed to share it with all who need it and who, in a measure, are "worthy and well qualfied" to receive it. But *in addition they must want it.*

"The Perfect Way" is confined to the spiritual evolution of man *and was written entirely independent of Eastern influence.* To H. P. Blavatsky was entrusted the first great disclosure of the Ancient Wisdom of the East including all realms in which man has his being.

Thru these revelations, we learn that in addition to Cosmic Consciousness—"Specialism"—there is another aspect of the hidden possibilities of the soul. This is an aspect to be approached from a different angle, for, in its perfection, it "gives rise to this gift of specialism."

Cosmic Consciousness is an expansion of the intuitions; it is subject to law and therefore descends upon every soul that has completed its requirements. This extension along the way of intuition brings with it intuitive knowledge of spiritual verities. But there is quite a different sort of knowledge to be acquired that is no more brought about thru intuitive channels than physical facts. There is indeed a method of procedure along scientific lines that develops in man *a definite set of new faculties.* With additional faculties, naturally, a human being has access to new sets of phenomena, and he is conse-

[104] Edward Maitland in *The Story of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland and of The New Gospel of Interpretation*

quently equipped to apprehend and state new facts. These facts that are above the physical cannot be proved by physical tests, but only thru acquiring the superphysical senses. Any one may evolve them who will fulfill the necessary conditions.

Here, then, are two stupendous facts:

(1) The potential power in man of a higher form of consciousness than that which he enjoys at present.

(2) The existence in man of innate, latent, unsuspected faculties that are already developed in some human beings of our own day, and have been in a few individuals of every generation since before all history.

The Eastern races have concentrated their attention and effort almost exclusively along spiritual lines, the Western, in extraordinary contrast, along physical lines. In fact the efforts of the Western civilization have been to gain knowledge on the physical plane, and it has been on the physical plane they have used their spiritual forces. It has been a conquest of the physical world. The danger has lain and lies in the failure to evolve along both the physical and spiritual, for each holds its own particular place in the evolution of the Ego. Altho many Hindus who have attained these new faculties may not have used them for ends that appeal to the Western mind and character, yet, as Edward Carpenter says, " it is possible that when the Western races realize what lies beneath this instinct of humanity, which seems to be their special inspiration, they will outstrip even the Hindus in their entrance to and occupation of the new fields of consciousness."

Why is it that so few have developed these advanced faculties? Enthusiasm to develop them wanes when the average seeker finds the rigor of the required work.

Even tho life is inevitably enriched, the tendency would be to deny the first-hand evidence of those who have undergone the rigid discipline rather than to undertake the self-discipline necessary.

Rudolf Steiner—both mystic and occult scientist—writes: "The mystic is aware that his knowledge rests upon superphysical facts which to him are just as tangible as those that form the foundation of the experiences and observations described by a stranger in Africa or any strange land. The way to higher knowledge is open to any one who will acquire for himself the faculties by which he may prove the spiritual truths herein claimed. The sincere mystic says to such, 'I do not claim to be chosen in the sense that you mean. I have merely developed within myself some of man's additional senses in order to acquire faculties thru which it is possible to speak of glimpses into superphysical regions.'"

At the present time societies of occult wisdom are scattered over the civilized world. There are imitators, of course, who exploit a degree of hidden knowledge for money, but you will never find a genuine disciple who accepts pay for his teaching.

Some of the schools are without merit while others are positively harmful. Blavatsky says that Esoteric Science is extensive and varied. It includes the secret teaching of *occult arts* which lead to sorcery and black magic. It includes a knowledge of occult powers awakened in Nature by performances of certain religious ceremonies and rites. "They teach the mystic powers residing in sound (ether); they teach knowledge of the forces of nature and their correlation. They lead also to sorcery of the worst description of the Tantrika worship!"[105] The Voodoos and Dugpas are dispensers of infernal arts. Blavatsky says that the only difference

[105] H. P. Blavatsky in *Practical Occultism*

between them and our hypnotists today is that the former are conscious sorcerers, and the latter unconscious. Bulwer Lytton in " Zanoni " and in " The Strange Story " illustrates the use of occult powers for good—called *White Magic,* and the use of occult powers for bad—called *Black Magic.* Under Black Magic comes the art of hypnotism. Occult science and arts are based on the knowledge of the ultimate essence of all things in the kingdom of material nature. They can be and are mastered to a certain extent without the development of lofty morals and a spiritual nature. True occultism " sets small value on these occult sciences. It includes them all and may even use them occasionally, but it does so after purifying them of their dross, for beneficent purposes, and taking care to deprive them of every element of selfish motive."[106]

We turn from the consideration of abnormalities. An aspirant to develop normally the faculties and powers lying dormant within, must purify his soul and acquire the essential qualities. " Meditation, abstinence, the observation of moral duties, gentle thoughts, good deeds and kind words, as goodwill to all and entire oblivion of Self, are the most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher wisdom."[107] Absolutely *" the knowledge of true wisdom necessitates moral and spiritual purity."*

Such moral and spiritual purity belong to the Mahatmas, for instance, who are said to be adepts of occult knowledge—Illuminated Ones—whose supernatural faculties equip them to explore the mysteries of nature. Each in turn verifies for himself the teachings which are passed down to him as a precious heritage. They are able to perform what are to the uninitiated, miracles, but which are really

[106] H. P. Blavatsky in *Practical Occultism*
[107] H. P. Blavatsky in *Practical Occultism*

the result of the exercise of developed spiritual powers. The same is true of the Arhats and Rishis. As James Freeman Clark said, " I am only expressing what has gradually grown into a belief in my mind thru reading ancient books and modern ones—books about faiths, religions, books about philosophies and magics, books about what the world calls marvels, but which are not marvels at all, but only the workings of the Law most people have not yet reasoned about or even accepted."

Such higher faculties *are not the end in view,* but are evolved in the natural sequence of advancing spiritual growth.

Except for minor variations the basic facts of all esoteric religions embody the same skeleton of truth; in them the colossal scheme of nature is practically the same. The scientific knowledge of the super-regions, and of spiritual verities, represents the accumulated results of age-long exercise of higher faculties. It is thru these that students have acquired masterly knowledge of the inmost secrets of Nature in all its phases, and of its superb scheme of a continuous evolution. They acquire facts in detail of man's involution—which came first—and his evolution—which is occurring now. It is thru these faculties that he learns of man's past, present, and future destiny. He finds out first hand " facts regarding vast regions of vital activities lying beyond this earthly existence." This knowledge can be and is being verified today because *it is capable of demonstration;* its fundamental laws must be fulfilled; and, as is true of all bodies of learning, it must be studied to be comprehended.

The truths taught have been verified over and over again, generation after generation, by Initiates who have developed these latent faculties by and thru which they may become cognizant. The methods of spiritual science are as rigidly accurate as those

used in our chemical laboratories. In fact, a scientific knowledge and understanding of the laws of physical nature comprise an introduction to the more advanced science of the superphysical. One incapable of understanding the former is not prepared to comprehend the latter. Physical science is discerned with one set of faculties; superphysical science with an added set of faculties potential in humanity brought into activity thru the instruction of the Masters of the higher science.

Such moral and spiritual purity is also required of those entrusted with the Kabala—a book containing a partial revelation of the esoteric truths of the Hebrews handed down from remote times. This book, to those who hold the key, discloses hidden meanings of the Old Testament, many of which are revealed in the use of names and numbers.[108] However, "the true archaic wisdom of the Hebrews remains in the guardianship of a few true sons of Israel."[109] A Jewish physician told me that his father had knowledge of esoteric truth which he promised to teach his son when he should become sufficiently purified and developed to receive it.

The Great Spiritual Leaders of the world have had access to higher knowledge; they have taught it. They have been and are on a spiritual elevation commanding an understanding view of the universe—undreamed by those human beings whose feet are glued to the ground. All of the mighty religious teachers have been "specialists." "Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens."[110]

Esoteric teaching, the special hidden wisdom of the Masters, leads to two large fields of experience:

(1) *Practical Occultism.* This, by exacting methods of self-development, and scientific research,

[108] T. Troward in *Bible Mystery and Bible Meaning*
[109] Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*
[110] Walt Whitman

reveals to the individual seeker, thru a vivid personal experience, a first-hand knowledge of the inner secrets of nature. It evolves higher faculties whereby man may observe for himself the generally invisible worlds, and learn with scientific precision the laws and principles that underlie them. It is an advanced course in science in the superphysical regions. Altho on a higher plane than the physical, they are still material. It does not deal with the things of Pure Spirit which is the case with Mysticism.

(2) *Mysticism.* This utterly transcends the material. It deals with the unfolding of the inner life in the realm of the Divine Spirit. The Mystic may or may not be a practical occultist. It depends upon his interest, attention to, and the development of the higher senses which respond to the vibrations of the finer than physical worlds. Many mystics ignore the superphysical regions—even when they are developed sufficiently to observe them. They concentrate themselves on the loftier task of coming into possession of their inner life. Their souls expand into ever widening states of consciousness till they become aware of the transcendental world and merge their own Egos with their Source—the Divine Whole.

Facts of the superphysical worlds are revealed not only by the practical occultists of the East, but by men and women of the West whose original inspiration sprung from the East. Even considered as having their source in the imagination, they are interesting and amazing.

As for mysticism—at home—our West—provides abundant revelations, and in Eastern lore we find its verification.

## XXXV

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Other Worlds—Other Bodies

MATTER finer than that which it is possible to see with the human eye exists—that is a known truth. It is known that sound is limited by the mechanism of the ear, which at a fixed point ceases to respond to vibrations. It is not that there are no vibrations to detect; it is that the physical sense has its limitations.

One summer in Maryland, from my window, I heard a prodigious noise resembling a policeman's rattle. It was a cicada. Now the cicada makes this sound by the use of internal muscles connected with apparatus on the lower side of the abdomen. This contraction and relaxation of the muscles is accompanied by a movement which has been observed by many scientists. These scientists have watched these same movements in insects of minute dimensions, but they hear no sound. Why not? Are these tiny creatures creating vibrations from their action? Yes, but our ears are not quite delicate enough to perceive them.

Rays of light tho too fine to be perceived by the eyes, cause visual effects in the physical world. X-rays and N-rays reveal their presence by the work they accomplish. It is possible to imagine still finer rays that are too highly vibrating to affect physical matter in any way whatever. Indeed there are said to be such rays. Physical science is already beyond the border: psychic analysis is taking us into

hitherto unknown fields. *Practical Occultism claims to know the existence of other worlds from experimental knowledge.* It states explicitly that we are here and now living in other worlds than the physical, but that our degree of consciousness is such that we are not aware of the fact. We are conscious of the physical world, unconscious of the superphysical—that is the difference. We are unconscious of the working of the physical cells that compose our physical bodies and yet upon their activity we depend for our lives.

We find the facts of the superphysical regions as positively stated as those in geology or physics. "These facts may be true," said an educated man to me recently. "They are new to me, but for years I have witnessed one amazing revelation after another. They will not stop coming this year or next." Preconceived opinions must be put away for a time if we are to examine the evidence with unprejudiced mind. We allow, at least, that there is much to learn outside our own experience. Let our attitude then be that of the genuine student who—until he has time for personal demonstration of truths—takes on faith what he is told by authorities. He holds himself in readiness to examine the data and use his reason at leisure.

I mean in the next few chapters to present facts included in the "Lesser Mysteries." There are many modern volumes on the subject: Steiner's "Occult Science" and Sinnett's "Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching" are among the best. The simplest for beginners are Annie Besant's Primers, containing descriptions of superphysical regions and phenomena observed by occult scientists. Her clearness of thought and aptness of expression reduce an unfamiliar science to its simplest terms. Her writings present a modern exposition of ancient

Eastern lore known to the few, but personally experienced by shining souls of the Western World.

These revelations have been made not to satisfy curiosity, but to increase the knowledge which makes for freedom. They give a clearer understanding of a perplexing world; they create sympathy and a generous allowance even for our flagrant sinners. They teach us to avoid a complacent acceptance of ourselves as we are at this moment, at this particular stage of growth. They show the inevitable dry rot that grows on a character wedded to its own failings, faults, or idiosyncracies. These revelations point out the object of earth-life and teach that there is a goal wonderful beyond words. A body of facts that can accomplish this is worth meticulous investigation.

The truths considered concern the regions of the superphysical, the psychical, and the spiritual—in fact they include all phases of existence. The superphysical is material, finer than the physical, but capable of being perceived when finer senses are evolved. It is continuation of the study of science on higher planes.

We are sensible of impressions but from one world at our present state of development; however, it is claimed that we are functioning in others. Every desire that we have, each emotion that we feel, takes form in what is called the desire or emotional world—named astral world. The astral world is next to the physical in fineness, and is made up of desire, emotional, or astral matter—three terms referring to the same material. Just as the physical world is made up of physical matter, the astral region is composed of astral matter.

The vibrations proceeding from astral matter are of such delicacy that unless one has some finer faculty to perceive swifter vibrations, he will see none of its sights and will hear none of its sounds.

The next still finer realm, named the mental world, is made up of much finer material than the astral. It is taught that every thought that we have takes form either in astral or mental stuff—the smoker puffing smoke into rings assists us in imagining this phenomenon. The vibrations emitted from mental material in the mental world are even swifter in their motion than those of the astral and are correspondingly finer. It would take senses of great refinement to register the sights and sounds of the mental world.

In order to function on the physical plane, man is provided with a body made of the identical material which composes the physical world. In order to function on the astral plane, man must be provided with a body made of the same sort of matter of which the astral world is composed. To be aware of the mental world—of finer matter than the physical and astral planes—he must have a body of mental matter.

As a part of the evolutionary plan, before man has finished his cycle of development here on earth, we are told that these other worlds are to form an intimate connection with his conscious life. While still in the physical body he will have become as consciously active in the astral and mental planes as he is now on the physical. It is these planes—hidden to the physical man—that are perceived by the disciple who has undergone rigorous, esoteric training.

## XXXVI

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Our Bodies—The Etheric Double

BEFORE we consider our astral and mental bodies—made of more finely attenuated matter than the physical—there is a phase of the physical constitution with which practical occultism claims to be familiar.

Science teaches that physical material is of varying degrees of fineness from solids, liquids, and gases to the ether which pervades all space. Esoteric Science goes further. Its facts are gathered together from personal observation, as in physical science, with this difference: finer senses with which to perceive them have been developed. They report that all space is permeated with ether, but that the ether is of four grades of fineness. This divides physical matter into seven classes instead of four.

The visible human body composed of solids, liquids, and gases is built, it is said, upon an invisible counterpart—a body comprised of these four physical ethers. The body visible to the ordinary physical sight is " point for point " integrated upon the " *etheric double,*" as it is called. This together with the physical may be considered properly as one body with perceptible and imperceptible parts. Altho the etheric double is not seen by ordinary vision, it belongs to the physical plane; at death, it remains near by and disintegrates with the physical body.

To the trained vision, it looks like a wraith of the

physical body; it is the same shape, but extends slightly beyond its outline. From observation, I should say a small fraction of an inch; it is greyish violet in color and is finer or coarser as the owner has a finer or coarser visible body. Many can see its outline on the fingers held under a strong light.

The particles of fine ether of which the etheric double is composed is in a state of constant motion—endless currents passing thru it. It transmits fresh forces with which to renew the depleted physical system. Were it not for its beneficent offices, the physical body would disintegrate as it does after death.

Every body that has life, including animals and plants, possesses such an etheric double; it is said that even in minerals there are traces of it perceptible to the attentive observer.

These vital forces are not generated within the etheric double, which but plays the part of middle man; for it transmits the renewing agencies resident within astral matter to the physical organism. As a mother bird to procure food for her young leaves them and flies to other parts, the Ego, during sleep, leaves the physical body and its etheric double. It gathers into its higher bodies—which it still inhabits—recuperative forces from regions of universal harmony. These are received by the etheric double and are passed on to the physical organism. It is not the etheric double, then, but the astral body that supplies strength-renewing forces which revitalize the human system.

## XXXVII

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Our Bodies—The Desire, Emotional or Astral Body

WE have been considering the physical body and its etheric double which also belongs to the physical plane. Now the astral, desire, or emotional body is made of astral matter. Blavatsky refers to the astral body as " the ethereal counterpart of the physical body." The etheric double, altho it, too, may be described in these terms, differs in that it is made up of *physical* ethers. Astral bodies, in distinction, belong to the still more tennous region of astral matter—finer than the most attenuated mist. It is finer—and therefore more highly vibrating in its particles—than the most subtile ether of the physical kingdom.

All physical bodies in the mineral, vegetable, animal, or human kingdom are built upon models of astral matter. The astral are said to be the true bodies, not the coarser physical—copies in rougher matter of a subtler prototype.

The astral realm is said to pertain to other heavenly bodies (or " Stars ") as well as to this earth. This is the origin of the medieval term " astral body." The other names " desire body " and " emotional body "—are used because it is a vehicle thru which the Ego experiences all desire pertaining to the physical sphere, and thru which it experiences all emotions—pleasure, joy, grief, and pain.

"It is easy to picture a man in a *well-formed* astral body; you can think of him as dropping the physical body and standing up in a subtler and more luminous copy of it, visible in his own likeness to clairvoyant vision, tho invisible to ordinary sight. I have said a 'well-formed body,' for an undeveloped person in his astral body presents a very inchoate appearance. Its outline is undefined, its materials are dull and ill arranged, and if withdrawn from the body, it is a mere shapeless, shifting cloud obviously unfit to act as an independent vehicle; it is, in truth, rather a fragment of astral matter than an organized astral body—a mass of protoplasm of the amoeboid type. A well formed astral body means that a man has reached a fairly high level of intellectual culture or of spiritual growth, so that the appearance of the astral body is significant of the progress made by its owner; by the definiteness of its outline, the luminosity of its materials, and the perfection of its organization, one may judge the stage of evolution of the Ego using it."[111]

As it vibrates to every thought, the astral body—"the organism of the soul," Rudolf Steiner calls it—continually changes color. One may compare it, he says, "to a luminous cloud which is discerned in the midst of the physical body. In this astral body, the impulses, desires, passions, and ideas become visible. Sensual appetites, for example, are represented as dark red outpourings of a particular shape; a pure and noble thought is expressed by a reddish violet color; the clear conception of a logical thinker will appear as a yellow figure with quite sharp outlines; while the confused thought of a cloudy brain is manifested as a form with vague outlines."[112] Independent clairvoyant vision is the result of normal evolution and is not mediumistic

[111] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*
[112] Rudolf Steiner in *Initiation and Its Results*

clairvoyance. Dr. Steiner suggests that those without clairvoyant vision may take the statement of the independent clairvoyant for granted long enough to apply it to what does come under his own observation. He can see for himself if it explains events and makes life clear and comprehensible. " Just as the thought of the creator of a house stands behind the physical laws which make it explicable, so, too, behind what is affirmed, with perfect accuracy, by physical science does there stand that of which occult science treats . . . . Events in the unseen world show themselves by their effects in the world of manifestation."[113]

The astral body is removed from active participation in its own native country—the astral realm—during waking hours. Thru its connection with the etheric double and the physical body, it receives the impressions transmitted to it from our outer world. During sleep, as the Ego releases the mind and astral bodies from the physical and its etheric double, they live in their own atmospheres. Here in the astral region, the astral body gathers in the vital energy that later—transmitted thru the etheric double—expels fatigue. It is the function of the etheric double to furnish the physical body with upbuilding, integrating, sustaining forces of nature. It is the etheric double which gives the physical body its form after models provided by the astral body. The etheric double, then, builds; the astral body provides the prototypes.

*The prototypes of perfect health, for instance, presented by the astral body to the etheric double during sleep, are, during waking hours, replaced by the soul's own images.* It may be easily conceived that the images of ill-health and disease

[113] See Chapter on *Sleep* in *An Outline of Occult Science by Rudolf Steiner*

presented to the etheric double by the conscious soul in waking hours are undesirable substitutions.

As the soul life of the individual unfolds, " the organism of the soul "—the astral body—develops. The clairvoyant sees in the astral body of the ignorant and the unevolved intellectually, morally, and spiritually, dark centers which in the advanced soul are of luminous color. In the former they are inert; in the latter, in motion. These are the sense centers of the astral body just as the eyes, ears, and nose are sense centers of the physical organism. In the astral body, the astral organs may be approximately located at points corresponding to certain centers in the physical body, i. e., between the eyes, at the larynx, near the heart, at the pit of the stomach, and two in the abdomen. Because of their shape, they are called " chakras " or " wheels," or " lotus flowers."

When a human being has reached a certain level of advanced soul development, these organs become lucent and later on, as he progresses further, they revolve. At this stage, the owner becomes clairvoyant; he sees in the astral world.

When a medium becomes clairvoyant these organs of the astral body appear luminous but they revolve in the opposite direction to those of the " independent clairvoyant."

Esoteric science teaches that the Individual Spiritual Ego has learned to fashion for itself a physical body with its completed physical organs. The human race is now—thru the soul development incident to living—evolving organs within the astral body. For instance, " *He who thinks or speaks anything that is untrue kills something in the bud of the sixteen petalled lotus* (*at the larynx*). Truthfulness, Uprightness, and Honesty are in this connection formative, but Falsehood, Simulation, and Dishonesty are destructive forces." Already there are

advanced human beings with developed astral senses, who are now organizing their mental bodies next beyond in fineness of material.

" The art of creation, like every other art, has to be learnt

Slowly, slowly, through many years, thou buildest up thy body,

And the power that thou hast now (such as it is) to build up this present body, thou hast acquired in the past in other bodies;

So in the future shalt thou use again the power that thou now acquirest.

But the power to build up the body includes all power."[114]

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[114] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

## XXXVIII

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Other Bodies—The Mind Bodies

KNOWLEDGE of the external universe acquired by man is not of objects themselves, but of illusive images of physical objects; these are presented to the mind with appropriate rates of vibration, thru the organs of sense. Things are imaged within us and it is these reproductions that we know, not the actual things themselves. A man knows a thing when he interprets the vibrations to which he responds, The activities concerned with knowledge in the human being take place in the material that composes the mind world—or mental world. This topic will be considered more fully in the chapter on Thought-Forms.

The mind-principle of man is dual in that one part connects him with all that pertains to the animal man, and the other part to all that pertains to the Spiritual Ego. To correspond to these two aspects of mind, man has two mind bodies: the lower which is referred to as the *mind body,* and the higher known as the *causal body.*

The Ego makes use of one of the bodies for every thought, for every process of reasoning, for all mental activities. We replace the worn off particles of our physical cell structure by transforming our food into what we require to renew the cells. The constant changes which our desire and mind bodies undergo are brought about by a simple giving up to, and taking on, material from the desire and mind atmos-

pheres. We respond only to such thoughts in others as we have prepared ourselves to receive by previous desires, emotions, and thoughts. We reach the consciousness of another only by arousing in him similar vibrations to those that emanate from ourselves.

The lower mental body—too fine, too highly vibrating to be perceived even by the awakened desire or astral senses—is exceptionally beautiful. During earth-life, it is oval shaped, but after death it assumes the shape of the former physical and astral bodies. In life, it intermingles with the physical and astral bodies, incoherent, and poorly organized in youth and in ignorant adults; but well organized and clear in those of advanced development. As we advance in intellectual growth, our mind bodies become larger and larger, and more brilliant in their scintillations. They grow thru the exercise of the intellectual faculties, thru concentrated thinking, thru the use of our creative powers, thru aspiration, and the higher emotions of love and sympathy. "For it is only by the exercise of the mind itself, using its faculties creatively, exercising them, working with them, constantly exerting them—*it is only by these means that the mind body can develop, and the truly human evolution proceed.*"[115]

The higher mind body—the *causal body*—is a form composed of the fifth and sixth subdivisions of mind matter, and is affected only by thoughts transcending the exterior world. It is the organ of abstract thought, and is an infinitely lovely film of matter in its rarest state. "It is the permanent body of the Ego or man lasting from life to life. *It is that into which everything is woven which can endure and in which are stored the germs of every quality to be carried over to the next incarnation:* thus the lower manifestations depend wholly upon the growth and development of this man for whom the hour never

[115] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*

strikes.''[116] "It is receptacle of human experience, the treasure house in which all we gather in our lives is stored up, the seat of conscience, the wielder of the will.''[117] Or again, it is called "the thread on which all the lives are strung, the reincarnating Sutrama, the thread-self. It is the receptacle of all that is in accordance with the Law—of every attribute which is noble, harmonious, and therefore enduring. It is that which marks the growth of man, the stage of evolution to which he has attained. Every great and noble thought, every pure and lofty emotion is carried up and worked into the substance.''[118]

It is said that the casual body is the lowest of the three divisions of the *spiritual body*. The "four portions of man's encircling form that have to do with the concrete world—the physical, etheric double, emotional, and lower mind body—compose that to which St. Paul refers as 'the natural body.'" "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." And he knew that there are other bodies, indicated by saying, "There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestial."

Walt Whitman writes:

"Of your real body, any man's or woman's real body,
Item for item, it will elude the hands of the corpse-cleaners, and pass to fitting spheres.
Carrying what has accrued to it from the moment of birth
To the moment of death."

[116] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*
[117] Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*
[118] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*

# XXXIX

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

## Auras and First Hand Experiences

NOT long ago, in New York City, a scientific man attended a meeting of physicians. The speaker, Dr. Abrams from California, had discovered that there is an emanation from the human body of a vital energy. It proved to be magnetic in character, but of too refined a nature, too highly vibrating, to be registered by physical instruments. He amply proved his assertion. He showed conclusively through physical experiment that similarly to static electricity, the energy could be collected from one individual and transmitted to another. This corroborated Esoteric Science which teaches and has taught for ages past that there are magnetic forces in the human aura—forces that have their origin in the astral plane.

An aura is the outer part of the finer bodies that interpenetrates and extends beyond the limits of the physical body and its appearance is said to indicate the stage of development of the Ego. It therefore may be regarded as a register which inevitably records any improvement that a man makes in any department of his nature. To the few who are able to see the full aura and its colors, the character of the observed person is an open book.

I attended once a meeting devoted to the subject of auras. The light was put out; we each looked thru two pieces of glass pressed together with a drop of some chemical. It was supposed to assist in

disclosing the aura. I saw nothing of the sort—much to my disappointment. My husband, however, saw the aura—a cloud-like substance surrounding the young lad on the platform. After we arrived home, he also, without the glass, saw my aura, with perfect distinctness. This was our first experience with auras. Judged from what has happened since, I believe that millions of human beings are sufficiently evolved to see them.

A year later, perhaps, I was guided by some inner impulse to look carefully at a seed that I held in my hand; it was embosomed in a cloud of delicate mist. I looked at many seeds and observed their auras. Then I tried a flower—a pink cosmos. It was a lovely sight—this blossom of fine texture, rosy pink in color, surrounded by a flame of nile green.

Several years of my life have been spent exclusively in the study of science which has always interested me. That is why I went to Boston Institute of Technology; that is why more recently I have spent two years in my husband's laboratory. The same accuracy of observation which has been trusted in the laboratory, I have brought to bear on these experiments. I examined flowers of different colors and various shades of the same colors. A large bunch of yellow crysanthemums proved spectacular in its wealth of surrounding violet. After a vase of cosmos had faded, I plucked the petals and left the cushions of yellow centers whose lovely violet flames flared up and greeted me with charming friendliness. The green leaves of the shrubs and trees were surrounded by red-plum color. Blue flowers associated themselves with orange flames, and orange flowers with blue auras. If I turn my head away quickly, I can see against a light background the image of the whole astral flower whose color is complementary to that of the physical color.

Later on, I happened to open Steiner's " Outline of Occult Science " at this paragraph:

" That which assumes physical form on earth, so as to be perceived by physical organs, is, in accordance with its spiritual nature, seen in the first region of the spiritual world." [He is referring to what we are calling the astral region]. " There, for instance, may be seen the force that fashions the form of the crystal. Only what is then revealed is the opposite of that which appears in the sense world. In that world, the space which is filled by a mass of rock appears to spiritual sight as a kind of hollow space; but around about this hollow is seen the force which fashions the form of the rock. The color of the rock in the sense world appears in the spiritual world as its complementary color; thus a red stone is green when seen from the spirit-world, a green stone is red, and so on."

The same phenomena that I observed in the vegetable world, I had found true, too, of inanimate objects—a yellow pencil, a green book, rocks, and so on. At first I had supposed an aura to be the outer part of the higher bodies of a human being, but later learned that an aura is possessed also by an animal, vegetable, and a mineral. This accords with the teaching of occult science that *everything composed of physical matter is constructed upon a model of astral matter.*

In Sulphur, Louisiana, there are piled into two mountainous masses—sulfur—hundreds of thousands of tons. My husband and I were almost blinded by the brilliancy and abundance of the violet aura; its vibrations so affected our eyes that everywhere we looked the violet color predominated.

Not long ago, I saw, centered upon a leaflet issued by a physicist, the picture of a red ball. The attention was directed to the complementary color surrounding the ball, not printed, but that which ap-

peared. It was called " color fatigue." That gives the phenomenon a name but does not explain it. One sees auras before the eye has time to become fatigued. Often, an aura is seen simultaneously with the object; it is beheld as readily and with as little effort as is expended in a glance at a cloud in the sky. Physical science speculates on possible explanations; practical occultism asserts facts thru personal experience.

A few years ago, when out among the trees at night, I remarked to my comrade, " What are all those streaks in the sky? Why! they look like branches." And as I brought the focus of my eyes to the trees, I clearly saw the lines of light tracing both sides of the trunk, branches, limbs, and twigs. This last summer, as from the bank I observed the trees outlined against Sebago Lake, they were flushed with color. Almost every person to whose attention I called this phenomenon could see it. " What *is* the color? " I always asked. Every one saw the same color.

Esoteric science teaches that the physical ethers and astral matter—of which the auras that we see are composed—are finer in particle and more highly vibrating than physical matter. If this is the fact, it would seem that the finer vibrations of invisible bodies reach the retina, but are not perceived in the presence of those from the physical object. Apparently those of swifter movement from the invisible bodies remain longer on the retina.

For instance, look at the blue aura of an orange flower held in front of a white background. You see the physical flower. Along the outline of the physical flower you observe that part of the astral flower that extends beyond the physical. A quick movement of the head will disclose against the white background the whole flower larger than the physical, and like the aura in color—blue.

I have read directions for seeing at dusk the aura of a human being who stands in front of a black curtain; the observer is told to stand thirty feet away. It is simpler for me to see this soft luminosity called the aura against a white background in a strong light. Yet it is often easy to see the aura of a speaker in a large lecture hall or theatre and also that of many individuals between the spectator and the platform. In Moving Pictures the auras surrounding actors—notably out of doors in mountain scenes—is often plainly visible.

The mind body in earth life is not shaped like the physical body, but interpenetrates it and extends beyond its surface somewhat as the white of an egg encloses its yolk. The aura of the mind body, consequently, stretches out far beyond that of the astral or emotional body.

I had an amazing experience recently—in a rare atmosphere of the mountains around Asheville! It was entirely unexpected; it absolutely transcended the power of imagination—certainly mine. It is difficult to accept evidence outside one's own experience. I have found it hard in the past myself, but I made up my mind when I wrote this book that I would report my facts with conscientious accuracy. I was in a perfectly normal condition; I was rested, tranquil, and interested.

A relative of mine was standing on a balcony adjoining my room; he was outlined against a background of soft grey sky. It had rained all that day and there was no hint of other color in the heavens. The conditions were excellent for seeing what I may call the ordinary aura; I directed my attention to this man five feet away for that purpose. Of a sudden, to my vivid amazement, a glory of light burst upon my view. It was almost too bright for my eyes! The man stood there like a central sun. A scintillating yellow light radiated from his body in

purity and splendor. Out beyond the mass and radiations of rippling, flashing yellow were two colors in limpid beauty—each in splashes by itself—rose, and green—clear, perfect beyond description.

I had seen his mind body—at least a portion of it! It was a superb sight beheld in breathless wonder!

The next evening I saw a golden sunset. The dazzling sun shone thru clouds of gold. That suggested the resplendence I had seen. Nothing else in nature could so nearly resemble the radiant beauty of a mind body.

Esoteric Science is definite in its report on auras. "The mental body," Annie Besant says, "is an object of great beauty, the delicacy and rapid motion of its particles giving it an aspect of iridescent light, and this beauty becomes an extraordinarily radiant and entrancing loveliness as the intellect becomes more highly evolved and is employed chiefly on the pure and sublime topics."

*Already scientific men have discovered the existence of a magnetic force surrounding the human body. Esoteric Science says, "Yes, it is the aura." Already a cloud-like substance is seen by the few—occasionally by many—surrounding material bodies. "Yes," says Esoteric Science, "It is the aura."*

Here we have it! Since writing the above, science proclaims itself at the border between the physical world and the superphysical. In a recent Scientific American is to be found the following:

"The Visibility of the Human Aura Demonstrated to the Layman."

Professor Walter J. Kilner, electrical expert of St. Thomas' Hospital, London, as given in his book entitled "The Human Atmosphere" says:

"Few of us realize that we are carrying around with us . . . a haze invisible under ordinary circumstances." This is what Esoteric Science has

tried to tell us. "Altho at present it is impossible to say exactly of what the aura consists, yet I feel positive that we are dealing with an ultra-violet phenomenon." He is right. Esoteric Science teaches that the aura is composed of material belonging to finer worlds than the physical.

Please recall the first paragraph of this chapter. Since that time Dr. Abrams has continued his investigations of the human aura. Upton Sinclair says, after watching Dr. Abrams in his laboratory, "If I were to tell all that I have seen with my own eyes in the last twelve days, I fear the reader would find his powers of credulity overstretched so I shall content myself trying to tell, in very sober and cautious language, the theory upon which Abrams is working, and the technic which he has evolved."

Thru his study of the human aura, Dr. Abrams is evolving a new method of diagnosis.

While material science is lumbering on, it is interesting if not thrilling to give open-minded consideration to the claims of truth asserted by Esoteric Science.

## XL

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Of the Worlds That Immediately Concern Us

ESOTERIC Teaching makes definite basic assertions upon which depend a large body of facts. Can we prove any of these for ourselves? We can. Such initial facts have become known thru personal experiences in our own lives. This claims respectful attention to their declarations and gives us confidence to accept provisionally knowledge of additional truths beyond our own demonstration.

There are seven worlds, it is reported, in which the human family live. The last two are so exalted that even those who have developed their latent faculties know very little about them. These spheres of Divine Activity and Consciousness that existed before the solar universe enclose all other five spheres, and from these two Divine Spheres spring the source of Life and Light and all "the divine energies which vivify and sustain the whole system."[119]

Right here and now—where we are—the physical, astral, mental or "Devachan," and the fourth and fifth worlds of Wisdom and Power, interpenetrate. But the fact is all seven worlds are here, for the seven spheres are concentric; each is so widely differentiated in fineness of material that not one of them is perceived by the inhabitants of the others. The physical realm in its constitution—in the coarseness of its matter and the slowness of the motion

[119] Annie Besant in *A Study in Consciousness*

of its particles—is, in points of refinement, the furthest removed from Pure Spirit. Matter becomes progressively more highly vibrating as it is distant from the earth. The astral world comes next to the earth. In a chapter on Spirit and Matter we considered the following authoritative statement: On the physical plane "matter is composed solely of electricity," or of etheric particles charged with electricity. Esoteric Science teaches that the finest particle of matter on the physical plane is the coarsest on the astral. How natural such a gradation seems!

A sponge filled with water occupies the same area as the water—an illustration of how several worlds varying in fineness of texture may occupy the same space. Ether penetrates solid physical matter. The pulsations of a vibrating tuning fork penetrate a solid wall and set into like vibrations another tuning fork of the same pitch; walls are no obstruction to worlds transcending ours in fineness.

Picture the physical world beginning at the center of the earth-globe; it extends in a belt beyond the surface of the earth to a distance which we may call "A". The astral or desire world also begins at the center of the earth-globe, but extends a sphere beyond "A" to a distance the limit of which we will call "B". Mr. Sinnett, in his latest reports on occult science, says that the loftiest astral region extends tens of thousands of miles beyond the physical. The mental world, too, begins, at the center of the earth-globe and extends beyond the astral limit, and this may be continued for the seven progressively finer worlds.

There is, then, a part of each of the finer worlds here where we are. A man may stay in the same place, and yet, as his consciousness expands, he will not be limited to the receipt of the slower vibrations; he may respond to swifter vibrations, and see sights

and hear sounds in finer realms than the physical. Are there unusual or abnormal experiences in life explainable by this fact? At present the greater part of mankind sees only physical matter, but what about children who are said to be naturally psychic? Do they perceive in finer worlds than the physical? In some cases their imaginary playmates are said to be children invisible to the physical sight.

The little son of a friend of mine said to his mother, "Mother, does God have skin?" Upon careful enquiry she elicited the following explanation: "When I am playing with Frinkles and Kimball"—two invisible playmates—"if I touch them my hands go right thru them." Bodies made of astral matter would have no reality to the physical touch. I know personally of other cases of that type; it is really independent vision. Later, as the child matures and his attention is riveted on the coarser physical vibrations, it passes.

Such independent vision is entirely different from the externally controlled vision of mediums—human beings hypnotized by ex-human beings who are spirit intelligences generally on the lower astral planes. As Mr. Sinnett says, "The medium is a passive instrument in the hands of invisible operators, and these are of all varieties. That accounts for the nonsense that often discredits the method."

Again, there are a few adults who are naturally psychic, but are not mediums. A man I have met was sent to an insane asylum years ago because he saw about him astral people whom his relatives could not see. After he was released, he was asked if he ceased to see them and he replied:

"No, only ceased to speak about them."

Such cases are not common and may be considered abnormal and undesirable. The only legitimate way to become aware of the finer worlds and to function in them normally—independent of others—is to de-

velop morally, intellectually, and spiritually. As the Divine Man said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door of the sheep fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."[120]

To enter by the door does not indicate a character one hundred per cent perfect, but it does indicate a selfless search for truth, self-control, high moral purpose, and a consecration of one's whole self to the service of humanity. It presupposes a constant struggle for perfection. These are the conditions that admit of the constructive evolution of the higher faculties.

When a man far in the advance of his generation—in the van of progress reaches a certain point in his evolutionary unfolding, he develops organs of perception in his astral and mind bodies, and these worlds become open to his observation. Their vibrations no longer play upon him in vain for in the course of normal evolution his consciousness has expanded to include them. It is an awakening of the consciousness on a higher plane. It has become natural for him to function in worlds finer than ours.

As Thoreau said:

"I hearing get who had but ears,
And sight who had but eyes before,
I moments live who lived but years,
And truth discern who knew but learning's lore."

"I hear beyond the range of sound,
I see beyond the range of sight,
New earths and skies, and seas around,
And in my day, the sun doth pale his light."

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[120] John 10:1, 2

It is in the light of Esoteric Teaching that we get the value of Thoreau's experience. As Jesus said, such a man becomes " the shepherd of the sheep." It is in the light of Esoteric Teaching that we understand what Walt Whitman meant when he said, " The eyesight has another eyesight and the hearing another hearing and the voice another voice."

At first a man with recently developed faculties is a child in a new realm and as each world is a new region to master, he must learn to observe and to interpret. Where there is a disagreement in the detail of a report, it is due to the observers and not to the truths observed. As on the physical plane, the same truths must be noted by a sufficient number of people during widely separated periods of time. This constitutes evidence of their actuality. Such evidence reveals new laws—our physical law of gravitation does not hold; there is said to be no heat nor cold; in the astral regions " traveling in the astral body is so swift that space and time may be practically conquered."[121] " That which permeates everything in the spiritual world [Steiner refers to the astral as " spiritual "] as earthly things and beings are permeated by heat—is the world of thought itself."[122] " Thoughts that have emanated from them formerly, they now see in an appropriate shape *endowed with life* coming toward them. On certain planes it is observed that all sides of an object are visible at the same time and that the inside of a solid is as visible as the outside."

" From that day forward objects turn round upon themselves with an exceedingly innocent air, but are visibly not the same," said Edward Carpenter.

" Swedenborg was one of the great men of all times—a great thinker, a great writer, a great scientist, a great engineer . . . His teaching at bottom

[121] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*
[122] Rudolf Steiner in *An Outline of Occult Science*

is that of all great seers—that God Himself is infinite love—that His manifestation, form, or body is infinite wisdom—that divine love is the self-subsisting life of the universe." [123] At the age of fifty-four Swedenborg had reached the stage of moral and spiritual development in which he began spontaneously to function in higher worlds. He wrote volumes on them as he observed and interpreted them, and upon his conclusions and judgments derived from first hand experience.

In our present unfolding we are intimately concerned with these five worlds which in time we are to occupy and to conquer consciously—as consciously as now we are conquering the physical plane. It is in the fourth and fifth that we are to take our course of advanced training in spiritual progress, for it is in these that the human being gradually becomes divine. It is in the second and third that we are functioning at present—whenever we have a wish, a desire, or an emotion—whenever we have a thought —whenever we meditate or have aspirations.

The author of the "The Candle of Vision" writes: "I have tried according to my capacity to report about the divine order and to discriminate between that which was self-begotten fantasy and that which came from a higher sphere. To ascribe visions of other spheres to 'refashioned memories' is to surmise in the subconscious nature a marvelous artist, to whom all that we have ever seen with the physical eyes is present at once . . ."

No, my friends, it is not imagination! The vibrations from all the "Seven Worlds" play upon us here where we are at the present moment. Whenever we shall have so lived that our higher bodies will have become organized, their organs will respond to finer vibrations, and our conscious Ego will be aware of new collections of facts. As the bodies

[123] Dr. Richard Bucke in *Cosmic Consciousness*

developed grow increasingly more unsubstantial, the more spiritual will be the type of experience. Heaven is here; we are incapable of receiving its spiritual vibrations because we have not lived a sufficiently exalted spiritual life. The heavenly bliss of Devachan is acquired only by keeping open wide toward spiritual realities the doors and windows of our souls.

# XLI

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

## Thought-Forms

THOUGHTS—as they exist at this stage of development—primarily belong to the self-conscious period of the human soul; in Cosmic Consciousness they are transcended.

Thoughts are often alluded to by philosophers as "things." To explain thoughts as things, and as creative power, it has been necessary to present as a background facts of the astral and mind worlds. Esoteric Science elucidates the nature of thoughts, their mechanism, and their effects showing that thoughts in the astral and mind worlds are as tangible as wood or stone in the physical.

Years ago, at the Edison works, I saw under the microscope phonograph cylinders. The tracing, along which the needle follows, stood out in bold relief; there were a multiplicity of all imaginable shapes and figures each corresponding to its special sound. Musical sounds had produced vibrations which were registered on the cylinder as forms.

So it is with thoughts. A multiplicity of shapes and figures are created which correspond to the vibrations individual to particular thoughts. "Thought is fluid and mobile like quicksilver, perpetually in a state of change and unrest."[124] Every thought takes on shape formed in astral or mind-matter; it is as if you embodied your thoughts in cloud-like stuff. Were you clairvoyant, you would

[124] Edward Carpenter in *From Adam's Peak to Elephanta*

see with your eyes that thoughts manifest themselves as forms.

In that delightful book "Thought-Forms," by Besant and Leadbeater, we are told that every thought sets up a vibration. This vibration corresponds to the nature of the thought in the astral or the mind body of the thinker. All thoughts that deal with the physical plane of life are formed out of the astral material within the astral body; the greater the refinement of thought, the finer of the seven subdivisions of astral matter goes into its composition. All thoughts that are purely intellectual, moral, or spiritual take form, each in that special degree of mind material within the mind body to which it is in tune. Whoever thinks on abstract questions of philosophy or the higher mathematics, functions thru the higher of the two mind bodies—the causal.

The prevailing color of astral and mind bodies depends upon the predominant characteristics of the Ego who owns them. In one person, for example, the astral body may be a clear light green evidencing sympathy; in another, it may be orange manifesting pride or ambition.

You have a thought, and immediately that material in your astral or mind body to which it is related in fineness or coarseness begin to vibrate. The body throws off from itself a portion of the vibrating matter which is shaped appropriately to the nature of the thought. This thrown off portion gathers to itself, from the surrounding atmosphere of the astral or mind worlds, material like itself in quality. It is then that we have

"*A thought-form* pure and simple, and it is *a living entity of intense activity animated by the one idea that generated it.*"[125]

A thought-form is vaguely or clearly outlined as the thought is vague or clear. As we think, colors

[125] Besant and Leadbeater in *Thought-Forms*

ripple over the astral and mind bodies. Those of ill developed selfish Egos are not lovely; they are composed of the duller hues of browns, turgid greens and reds. In a person of high type, however, they are radiant and beautiful and the more his thoughts are focused on a lofty level, the more refined in its texture the mind body becomes.

A man centers his thoughts on holy subjects. There is a resulting rush of religious feeling, and action follows in the infinitely subtile mind matter to which it is tuned. The whole mind body is for the time being veiled over with clear blue. Such a thought-form is thrown off from the mind body to gather its like in material from the surrounding mind-matter atmosphere. The mind itself acquires some of the higher vibrating matter and increases its own rate of vibratory motion. It has added to its power of receiving swift vibrations in the future and its prevailing color has taken on an added tinge of blue. It is in this manner that every lofty thought lifts the average fineness of the mind body of the owner; and it is in this manner that the oftener noble aspirations are repeated, the more readily the mind body tends to assume a superior arrangement of finer matter. As this occurs, the Ego produces lovelier thought-forms pregnant with power for good. It thus becomes increasingly more natural to harbor elevated thought, high ideals, and unselfish ambition. And what is their scientific effect? They produce living thought-forms whose vitality is expended in manifesting these ideals in the visible world. Made of such material and enhanced by a strong and steady will, each thought-form is powerful and energetic " and may be used as a most potent agent."

" Imagine thought, as it now exists in man," writes Steiner, " raised out of him, and, as an active, energetic being, endowed with an inner life of its

own, and you have a feeble illustration of that which fills the fourth region of the spirit world ''[126] [referring to what we have designated as the desire or astral world]. '' What is understood by man in the manifested world as thought is but a shadow of what lives as a thought-being in the spirit world. There thoughts must be regarded as living and independent beings.''

So it is that thoughts are called '' things.'' As Balzac said:

'' To Lambert, therefore, Will and Thought were living forces.''

We are the creators of living beings; they are animated by our own emotions; they are endowed with power to carry out our mission good or bad. How are we to face this responsibility?

What have the observers of these phenomena reported thru the repeated experience of generations? What becomes of such a being of our own creation?

It floats about in the atmosphere. A thought created by personal feeling, or one centered upon yourself, hovers about you; it waits to react upon you when you shall have ceased from activity. A man's thought—base or elevating—hovers about him till his mind is at leisure—then it pushes itself upon his attention. In fact, '' each man travels thru space enclosed within a cage of his own building, surrounded by a mass of forms created by his habitual thoughts. Thru this medium he looks out upon the world and naturally he sees everything tinged with its predominant colors, and all rates of vibration which reach him from without are more or less modified by its rate. Thus until the man learns complete control of thought and feeling, he sees nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made thru this medium that distorts and colors everything like a badly-made glass.''[127]

[126] Rudolf Steiner in *Initiation and Its Results*

A thought directed toward another produces a floating form which travels directly to the person in question and merges with either his desire or mind body. If in these bodies there is no material which vibrates at the identical rate of the visiting thought-form, it returns and reacts upon its creator. In a family, perhaps, one member gets the reputation for shirking; now every time the thought is harbored by any one of them, a thought-form merges with the lazy member's shirking vibrations and accentuates them. A conscientious habit of doing his share is thereafter more difficult to establish. When possible, every thought-form hovers about the object of thought and tries to execute its individual mission; its term of life may be lengthened or shortened by thoughts of a like or unlike nature.

Thoughts not personal to ourselves, nor directed toward others, simply float in the atmosphere. And there they are—ready to impinge upon the astral or mind body of anyone with whom they come in contact and with whom such thoughts are in tune. For the pure, impure thoughts do not exist; upon the forgiving, revengeful thoughts have no effect. The tendency for all thought-forms is to set in motion vibrations like themselves and bring forth thoughts of a similar nature. It is the character of the thought not its exact application that is communicated. We guard ourselves from base thoughts by purifying our own.

Every thought has its own peculiar nature, quality, and degree of clearness which determine the form, color, and precision of outline. Unselfish affection, for instance, is the quality that produces rose color, and an unselfish use of the intellect makes a thought-form of a pale, luminous primrose yellow. I myself saw dart from the head of a lecturer in a small room a violet thought-form; it shot so swiftly

[127] Besant and Leadbeater in *Thought-Forms*

upward that I perceived only a bunch of compact violet.

There are thought-forms that are shaped like physical objects. The authors of "Thought-Forms" saw in a fashionable church instead of the clear clouds of blue—which indicate religious feeling—a vast conglomeration of thought-forms floating above the "worshippers." They were astral images of hats and bonnets, of jewelry and gorgeous dresses, of horses and carriages, of whisky bottles and of Sunday afternoon dinners. They observed also "whole rows of intricate calculations, showing that men and women have had alike during their supposed hours of prayer and praise no thoughts but of business and pleasure, of the lower desires of mundane existence."[128] There are thought-forms shaped like geometrical figures; there are those shaped like buds and blossoms. An exquisite sky-blue flower was the outcome of a prayer of self-renunciation.

Thought is the structure of character; we cannot think harm without doing harm. We cannot do our part in reducing sin, sickness, and sorrow, nor in uplifting humanity unless we control our thoughts. Our own evolution must first be quickened by a willed attention to our own thought-life; otherwise, we are not cooperating with God in His plan for the redemption of man.

Knowing these facts, what are we going to do about it?

Our responsibility with regard to thought-forms concerns it self with three questions: With what sort am I surrounding myself? What kind am I sending forth to my friends, and associates? What is the nature of the thought-forms I create to float about—those to be absorbed by human beings suited to receive them?

[128] Besant and Leadbeater in *Thought-Forms*

With what sort of thought-forms am I surrounding myself?

Something has occurred to dim my joy, and my habitual content when all goes well is disturbed. I have stored away no reserve sunshine with which to dissipate this shadow; I sink into depression with no exercise of will-power. What an inert method of meeting a soul test! I create by these thoughts of discouragement an ugly, muddy-grey thought-form the object of whose existence is to make me depressed. The oftener I succumb, the more vitality I supply to the thought-form that hovers about me fulfilling its mission.

Or, perhaps, I am anxious and worried; the resultant thought-forms endeavor to bring about the dreaded conditions. Possibly my egotism takes the form of sensitiveness. Mr. Brown engaged in thought does not notice me, and I say resentfully, "He dislikes me!" Behold! I create a thought-form—an artificial elemental—the result of whose activity is to make my thought a fact. I, myself, in this manner, create in him the attitude I deplore.

But the law may be used to assist us. Continued affirmation creates thought-forms that assist in building into our characters selected qualities. The envious man, in time,with persistent thinking on its opposite, eliminates envy and substitutes pleasure in another's joy of possessing. Even a fleeting thought counts in the every day building of our astral and mental bodies. If the thought is for good —even altho it almost instantly disappears—some of the coarser material is shaken out of the body effected, and some finer matter from the appropriate atmosphere is taken on in its place. If the thought is for bad, some of the finer material of the astral or mental body is shaken out and some coarser matter is taken on. It is in this manner that our in-

visible bodies measure the progress of the inhabiting Ego.

Thoughts come and go in rapid succession, but hospitality should not be offered to all alike. In miscellaneous reading and hearing, there are many to be rejected—suggestions of misery, disease, and failure. They should not be allowed to play upon the astral body freely lest they become interwoven into its substance; they do good to no one. All thought-forms not concurring with one's judgment, conscience, and taste, sent forth by outsiders, should be repelled by an exercise of the will or by the substitution of acceptable thoughts. It is everyone's privilege to select from thought-forms hovering about him those that make for sweetness, purity, prosperity, and wisdom.

What kind of thought-forms am I sending forth to my friends and associates?

If my thoughts of others are lifeless and without interest to myself, the resulting thought-forms dissipate practically as soon as they take form. To reach a destination there must be enough feeling or emotion to endow the thought-form with life; it is I who provide the energy. The thought-form, therefore, must be endowed with sufficient vitality to reach another astral or mind body and set up within it like vibrations.

It is a common habit in the absence of friends to discuss them; their turned backs are switches that release the criticism. Now criticism produces thought-forms that rush to augment the energy of those similar thought-forms surrounding the friend. The critics, therefore, become party to the persistence of the very faults they deplore. It is therefore more than a question of taste; it is a wrong committed. Fear is also detrimental to dear ones and should be supplanted by thoughts of faith and love which enrich with resulting beneficence.

Annie Besant says, "a thought of love and desire to protect, directed strongly toward some beloved object, creates a form which goes to the person thought of, and remains in his aura as a shielding and protecting agent; it will seek all opportunities to serve and all opportunities to defend, not by a conscious and deliberate action, but by a blind following out of impulse impressed upon it, and it will strengthen friendly forces that impinge upon the aura and weaken unfriendly ones. Thus we may create and maintain veritable guardian angels round those we love, and many a mother's prayer for a distant child thus circles round him."

The well intentioned mean neither to harm others nor to make them unhappy. They frequently refrain from expressing their thoughts in words to avoid hurting feelings—but they elaborate the idea, little understanding thought to be the vital entity it is. They do not suspect the truth—that they are creating something that goes and dwells with that person—that thoughts of evil are insidious attacks impossible to parry because unperceived.

"Thus man's whole force," said Balzac, "had potency to react on others and to infuse into them an essence foreign to their own, if they did not defend themselves from the aggression."

According to our former knowledge, whoever would have suspected the grave responsibility of haphazard thinking? Whoever—who would not kill—would have dreamed himself guilty when a sincere wish to murder occupied his thought? And yet a thought-form of his own creation is the impetus, or at least the added impulse, that instigates crime in a less developed soul! It is not only our acts but our thought that teem with results affecting not only ourselves but individuals both known and unknown to us.

What is the nature of thought-forms we create to float about—those to be absorbed by human beings suited to receive them?

Do our thought-forms add to the sum of the world's good or evil? They float about in space; we know not their destiny, and yet for every one that emanates from us we are responsible.

We have neither the necessary time nor money to give to a reform movement appealing to our judgment. Are we helpless to aid? Indeed no! A swift, deep-seated strongly felt thought sends forth a thought-form to be absorbed by some one who can and will assist. An invalid who cannot leave her room can send potent influences forth into the world of action. An individual living a quiet, retired life, apparently doing nothing to better the conditions brought into being by selfishness rampant—may befriend a cause. Her thought-forms endowed with holy passion for righteousness manifested upon earth are mighty factors in the uplift of her generation.

Just by being what he is, one more highly developed than ourselves benefits us by his near presence. In his mind bodies, there are finer degrees of material than in our own. In us there may be no matter of sufficient delicacy to respond to his expressed thought. And yet, his vibrations set up a quiver in our mental bodies which prepare them for a more definite response the next time we come into touch with thought-vibrations of so exalted a nature. The more habitual our higher thoughts become the greater the ease with which we respond to lofty concepts.

Who is it that regulates the materials of which our astral and mind bodies are composed? Ourselves. As we select the material in food and drink of which our physical bodies are made, there is a similar process in regard to our higher bodies! Our de-

sires, feelings, emotions, passions, and thoughts of all degrees of coarseness or purity, error or truth, evil or good, constitute the "food" for growth of our invisible higher bodies. Anything that we can do to improve ourselves makes our finer bodies take on a superior degree of astral and mental matter and augments our value as living souls. These bodies register our progress in the flowering of intellect and character. To develop them is not an end in itself, but their growth is an indication of one's status; they measure the stage of the Ego's evolution. As at present we are aware of the physical universe, in years to come, men will cognize all these truths and each will perceive for himself thought-forms and their effects. He will understand how we can be "*transformed by the renewing of our minds.*"

It is folly to confine self-control to acts and words alone, for it is thoughts that determine them; the control of thoughts is vital. By our own inactivities, we lay ourselves open to evil influences; by our indifference, we harm others. We must bear in mind that a thought-form once created acts in response to the idea that gave it birth. Although the thought may endure but a moment of time, the consequent thought-form may be endued with power great enough to last years. The deeper the feeling that accompanies the thought, the more intense the emotion, the more violent the passion, the greater the endowment of will-power—then the more permanent will be the life and energy and single-pointedness of the creature sent forth. And, in direct proportion, the more serious our responsibility becomes.

Esoteric Science teaches that our thoughts past, present, and future—together with the emotional force and mental energy that accompany them—determine our surroundings and the conditions of our

lives. The thoughts of a past existence not yet balanced in the experiences of the Ego, by Nature's great Law of Compensation, may come to fruition in this present earth-life. In some future life, it is taught we reap what we have sown here, but have not yet harvested.

## XLII

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### At So-Called Physical Death or Birth Into the Astral Realms

IF you could read a stanza written by Pythagoras five hundred years before Christ, quoted and recommended by Epictetus in the first century A.D., and if you knew that the advice given was adopted by Benjamin Franklin in the Eighteenth Century—would you not be interested to know what two of the greatest teacher-philosophers of all ages advised as a definite line of action? Would you not take it home to yourself?

Epictetus said of them: "We should retain these verses so as to apply them to our use; nor merely to say them by rote."

"Let not the stealing god of sleep surprise,
Nor creep in slumbers on thy weary eyes,
*Ere every action of the former day*
*Strictly thou dost*—and righteously—*survey.*
What have I done? In what way have I transgressed?
Where have I failed in what I ought to do?
If evil were thy deeds, repent and mourn;
If good, rejoice."

Who would suspect that back of this inspired and yet very practical advice was hidden knowledge derived from personal observation? Esoteric teaching revealed that (1) Such a review "for those who have been too deeply absorbed by the lower interests

of physical life " is an absolute fixed law of higher Nature. (2) Sooner or later for such individuals it must take place. (3) And obedience to these words of Pythagoras would relieve many of us from discomfort or misery on the other side. We would not suspect it, and yet it is true! Even for human beings who are not absorbed in the lower material interests—and to whom the law does not apply, the suggested review is of incalculable value. " Not one word or deed but has results beyond death, as really as before " comes from another illuminated soul—Walt Whitman.

Evidence of this fact of nature lies in the well known experience of a person about to drown. Scene after scene of his life passes before his mind with astonishing vividness, event after event in minute detail—so it is with the transition called " death." It is a process of such vital importance to the Ego that much of the value of the life just lived is discounted or defeated if this normal review of nature is interrupted. Consequently, every human being should be allowed to " die in peace." No one should be subjected to the effects of stimulants nor to the disturbing element of turbulent grief; both distract the attention from this critical process of the soul. As one dying sinks into unconsciousness or dreamy happiness, the unrestrained sorrow of those who are dear call him back to acute unhappiness.

The details of his life just lived pass in review before him as a spectator; they appear in reverse order, the last coming first. This rehearsal, it is said, endures from a few hours with some to several days with others. The long film of thoughts, words, deeds, experiences, unrolls and becomes " etched " on the astral body. It is within this vehicle that the Ego so destined will express itself when later, for a time, it *relives this earth life* on the third astral plane *in thought and feeling.*

Death is a change; it is a beginning, not an end; it is an end only of the soul's expression through that particular physical body. As Edward Carpenter has pointed out:

> "When the body which thou hast falls away,
> another shall be already prepared beneath,
> And beneath that again another.
> Always that which appears last in time is first, and
> The cause of all—and not that which appears
> first."

The transition from this life to the next is the beginning of a new consciousness, an awareness on another plane of being. Death occurs and new manifestations of life are brought forth. It was William Blake who said, "I cannot think of death as more than the going out of one room into another."

Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, a distinguished physician and author in the last generation, "foreshadowed with wonderful accuracy the evolution and discoveries of the race during the past half century." He wrote that "the philosophy of death was the philosophy of change *in the situation of the human spiritual principle.*"

As an insect sheds its skin, the Ego throws off the body for which it has no further use; it is a birth into a new kind of life. Dr. Davis describes his own personal experience observing the translation of one of his patients—a woman of about sixty years. He found himself, he reported, "in just the psychological state to witness the change."[129] He watched the finer head emerge from the physical head, the shoulders from the physical shoulders, till he saw unfolded lengthwise what he called the entire "Spiritual organism." This was a precise duplicate of the patient except much younger and far more comely.

[129] Robert Thompson in *Proofs of Life After Death*

The time taken for the change in this case was three hours.

The Ego having shed its physical body awakes in that particular subdivision of the astral world with which its own astral body is related in fineness of texture. There are seven such subdivisions—seven astral regions—which serve as abiding places for the varied grades of human beings. It is the state of one's character which has determined the rate of the vibrations of one's astral body and consequently its degree of fineness. If the material of one's astral body is the same as that of the third astral plane, there he stays and relives his earth life. There he sees more clearly and feels more acutely than when on earth where his perceptions were dulled by his grosser physical body. There he sees from the other man's point of view and feels the effects of his own former words. He comprehends what were his past unthinking blunders; he experiences vividly what he made others undergo.

The individual has arrived on the other side as he left the physical plane with only in addition the experience of having emerged from his physical body. He has the same tastes, prejudices, propensities, and feelings; he is, however, more acutely conscious of his earthly defects, and draws his lessons from them. The effect of such a review constitutes a part of the benefit he derives from earth-life, for as he repents of evil done, of wrong pursued, he becomes purified from all that is detrimental and antagonistic to spiritual progress.

If during life here, the Ego strictly surveys as an outsider his actions of each day, if he repents as he goes along, and if he rectifies the wrongs he has done —he has already woven into his permanent self the benefit won from every mistake and from all sin committed. Under these conditions the law of reversal has already been balanced and the process of

reliving in thought is not repeated after so-called death. This daily review, then, was recommended by Pythagoras and Epictetus with a full realization of its creative values. They knew that behind this—as indeed back of all moral precepts—are the balancing laws that connect their violation with retribution and their adoption with recompense.

At death, the coarser physical body is the only one that the Ego immediately leaves behind. In the case of any worthy law-abiding, self-respecting human being, his etheric double is soon shed and left to return to the finer physical elements of which it is composed.

When a germ dries up from lack of proper moisture and nutrition, it dwindles till there remains merely a speck—called a "spore." Years later, perhaps, the spore coming into contact with that which it requires for growth develops into full germ. "As above, so below." The germ spore contains the promise of the full grown germ; the tulip bulb contains the possibilities of a special tulip. What relation do these facts have to the physical body after death? For every physical body, there is a seed-atom containing the possibilities of the particular physical body left behind. The seed-atom of the physical body is retained in the etheric double; when the etheric double is shed, seed-atoms of both the physical body and the etheric double are retained in the astral body. As the Ego advances to the mind world, it carries in addition a seed-atom of its astral body.

The stay of the former human being in the third astral region, which begins at the surface of our earth, depends entirely upon the individual himself. It is said that for the average person who passes into that plane it takes about one-third of the time of his earth-life to relive that period. But we are told by Mr. Sinnett that "the fairly well-behaved

majority will slip through the third sub-level without finding themselves entangled in it. They awake to consciousness on the fourth level of the astral world, the circumstances of which are almost infinitely varied and in which happiness is the underlying principle.''[130] He says, in fact, that from the fourth thru the seventh astral regions there is scarcely an emotion tinged with suffering.

I have already said that there are seven astral regions. Now, two of them are below the surface of our earth. They constitute '' hell,'' and only the most horribly degraded and the cruel go there. Dante's Inferno has basis in fact. It serves to purge these ghastly offenders against divine love; and its purpose is curative.

In the long intervals between earth-lives there is provided an environment suited to every stage of evolution. On the first level of the fourth astral plane are to be found good people who have enjoyed no aspirations beyond happiness in the physical life. We are told that '' dead people ''[131] who wake up in the lower regions above the earth's surface find themselves in a perfect replica of the physical world in far more beautiful material, and believe themselves still in the physical world. It is more intensely real than here on earth, being less removed from Pure Spirit.

Every physical object, we are informed, is a coarse duplicate of a finer astral model about which it is integrated; for this reason the physical world is often referred to as an '' illusion.'' Astral objects are externalized thoughts; as thoughts change, the finer matter of the superphysical realm rapidly changes its shape. The dense physical material, however, is slow to respond.

The astral world is said to be full of continually

[130] A. P. Sinnett in *Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching*
[131] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*

changing shapes—some of which we considered under " Thought-Forms "—and to abound in inconceivably lovely color. " The Many Colored Earth," A. E. Russell calls it, " which is superior to this we know yet related to it as soul is to body." The astral world is reported to teem with life to a bewildering extent because astral matter is alive with force—not so difficult to imagine when we recall the coarsest form of astral matter to be electricity or an infinitesimal particle of ether charged with electricity. It serves as a pathway for vital forces—electric, magnetic, and chemical, whose activities are shown in attraction, cohesion, and repulsion playing through physical matter. It is a vehicle for the One Life " whose currents surround, sustain, and nourish every particle of physical matter."

For those who have passed over with no lofty ambitions or aspirations, the lower level of the fourth astral realm provides them with houses to live in, amusements to their tastes, theatres, beautiful scenery, and many other interests they know in the physical world. *It is true on this plane—it is true on all planes after we leave the earth-life, they associate only with congenial friends.* Here on the fourth astral plane they stay till gradually they become divorced from the physical and its related interests; they then pass on into higher regions with loftier occupations.

Mr. Sinnett writes that as students of the higher occult science have come to understand the life and opportunities of the higher astral world, they find that they had originally a mistaken idea of the Devachanic state in the mind world.[132] They supposed it to be the goal aimed at by all, and a promotion. Occult investigators have found that work is done on higher astral planes for which the mental world is not adapted. After Egos have become more

[132] A. P. Sinnett in *Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching*

and more spiritual and have reached the highest level of the fourth plane, their next abode depends upon their tastes and acquirements—one subdivision is not superior to the others. Scientific men have splendid opportunities for expansion along their line on the fifth which is the special region of intellectual progress. "The sixth is more devotional in its character"; the seventh provides leaders of men with place and conditions to improve their qualifications in this respect. "All the great scientific men, poets, and artists of the last three hundred years are still on the higher levels of the astral worlds even tho they may have access to still higher realms and may avail themselves of that privilege from time to time."

But for all alike—with a very few exceptions—as the decades pass, Egos shed their final astral bodies, add its seed-atom to those of the physical and etheric bodies and pass into the lofty region beyond—the mental world, or Devachan, "The Land of the Gods."

## XLIII

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Devachan

THE Ego awaits in Devachan in a state of complete purity—"the ideal reflection of a human being it was when last upon earth."[133] All that is unperfected in its character has passed into germ to reappear when the extended period of its life in Devachan is ended. Evil cannot be carried into the realm of Spirit where there is nothing to answer to evil; it can find here no mode of expression, nothing in which to inhere. Evil is, in fact, a part only of the temporary. No other tendency than that pertaining to good has its root in this region of continuous bliss. Earthly life—the period of trial—is over for the present, and short it is in duration compared to the prolonged season of compensation and delight! It is a condition of perfect happiness called "an idealized and subjective continuation of earth life . . . . . the very acme and pith in an unbroken series of the few happy moments of that now past existence."[134] It is a vivid, active, increased form of consciousness. "It is a life of effects not of causes: a life of being paid your earnings not of laboring for them. It is a period of fulfillment the triple hundred-fold payment for all good springing from an individual in earth-life."[135]

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[133] H. P. Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy*
[134] H. P. Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy*
[135] A. P. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism*

For an essentially selfish life on earth expressing little of good, there can be no prolonged stay in Devachan. There is no foundation upon which to build. His place is in appropriate astral regions. "For the humbler members of humanity," Mr. Sinnett says, "there would not be sufficient spiritual nucleus left after physical memories were left behind to enjoy any consciousness on this exalted plane, but it would be the prelude to an unconscious plunge back into incarnation."

At the time of death there are many who have outgrown all attractions and desires pertaining exclusively to earth-life and are already spiritual minded. Thru spiritual thoughts and the type of life resulting from them, the Ego, while yet in the physical world, has developed its astral body to such a degree of refinement that soon after release from its physical instrument its astral is also shed. Human beings of this nature pass almost at once into Devachan and function in a lower mind body. But there are very good people also, who, lacking all intellectual attainment, are unprepared for progress on the higher astral planes. Mr. Sinnett asserts that these pass into "a condition of blissful illusion on the lower levels of Devachan." In the season of rest between two earth-lives an environment is provided suited to every individual Ego.

"It is only when the Ego, freed from all the ties of sense, turns inward to behold his own inner 'holy of holies' that his true innermost nature, which had hitherto been obscured by the sense, is revealed to him. Just as the Ego is recognized inwardly before death, so, after death and purification, is the spiritual life inwardly revealed to him in all its fullness . . . . . Whereas, before death external images had to be brought before it, for the light of consciousness to fall upon them, a world now

streams, as it were, from within, and penetrates to consciousness.''[136]

The Ego beholding its own innermost nature focuses its attention upon the spiritual revelations in this veritable '' Kingdom of God '' within. It is conscious of every striving to improve while on earth, of every sacrifice, is aware of everything that was of an unselfish nature, every heaven-born longing, each noble stirring, all affection and love. It retains memory of all efforts to attain knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. '' All the great plans of moral reform, of intellectual research into the abstract principles of nature, all the divine spiritual aspirations that had so filled the brightest part of his life would in Devachan come into fruition . . .''[137] The heaven of each person is precisely fitted for his capacity for enjoying it. Whatever he experiences is the direct result of his own aspirations and ideals while on earth, and of his effort to exercise his faculties and bring them into expression.

We are told further that there is always a multiplicity of change in occupations that are delightful, congenial, and satisfying. It is during this period of existence that the Ego transmutes the efforts made while on earth into added capacities and powers. Even an attempt in the past to accomplish in any line is interwoven into the permanent spiritual fibre as an added faculty. In the struggle to accomplish our daily duties and to solve the problems that inevitably arise as we live along, there is a moral and spiritual growth. It requires care, accuracy, and patience, for instance, to square accounts, to keep house, or to raise vegetables.

'' During the present life, we are gathering materials . . . during Devachanic life, we work up

[136] Rudolf Steiner in *An Outline of Occult Science*
[137] A. P. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism*

these materials, transmuting them from separate efforts of thought into faculty of thought, into mental powers and activities. That is the immense change made during Devachanic life and inasmuch as it is limited to the use we are making of earth-life, we shall do well to spare no efforts now. [*And this applies whether we are eighteen or eighty.*] The mind body of the next incarnation depends upon the work we are doing in the mind body of the present: here is, then, the immense importance to the evolution of man of the use which he is now making of the mind body. It limits his activities in Devachan, and by limiting these activities, it limits the mental qualities with which he will return for his next life on earth."[138]

It is also at this period of the Ego's existence that it learns to make for itself better bodies and, in order to keep pace with its own evolution, it assists in the gradual transformation of the physical earth. It is, moreover, at this time that certain powers and higher faculties it has particularly striven for on earth are acquired, and that such abstract knowledge as the higher mathematics and music can be pursued. The Ego remains in a state of unalloyed happiness until the causes which produce it are exhausted. Mr. Sinnett says, " causes produced by mental and spiritual energy being far greater and more important than those that are created by physical impulses, their effects have to be for weal or woe proportionately as great." Madam Blavatsky states that the average time of the stay in Devachan is from ten to fifteen centuries. As this is an average, it might mean a very short time for some, and a prolonged sojourn for others. A mean, sordid earth-life, or one that has been brutal or disordered, does not create causes whose effects attract that Ego into Devachan. Its stay is in other

[138] Annie Besant in *Man and His Bodies*

regions; its place is not there for any length of time. Its harvest is not comparable with that of an individual whose earth-life was filled with noble and unselfish effort and who had developed a high degree of spirituality. However, in order to be of greater service to mankind, an increasing number of advanced Egos voluntarily give up the period of bliss and return to earth.

Just at present, we are in a period remarkable for the acceleration of human evolution. It operates to hasten the return of all the more evolved souls. The latest word I have seen on this subject is Mr. Sinnett's "Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching." He writes that "for a considerable number of advanced Egos in the civilized world, a period of only about three hundred years is now going to be an average time between two lives. For a larger number representing, of course, a somewhat less evolved condition of either spiritual or intellectual growth, a seven hundred year period is going to be the average, and for probably a still larger number representing normal conditions of ordinary life a thousand year period is going to be the average instead of that fifteen hundred year period which prevailed during the earlier part of last century."

For all alike the time arrives when the Spiritual Ego has woven into its permanent self the essence of all the good derived from its last sojourn. "The desire for fresh experiences is inevitably engendered in the Ego when all so far gathered has been absorbed" by the Higher Self. The harvest is reaped; it is the hour of the beginning of a new sowing. The divine fragment of God on its continuously progressive path prepares for a new era of compulsory schooling on the old earth. Back it comes—in a new set of bodies founded upon the seed-atoms held in reserve.

## XLIV

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

### Natural Gifts

IN the span of one brief earth-life would it be possible to create out of a new soul a man such as Phillips Brooks, as Emerson, or as Walt Whitman? Let any who reads compare himself with the native Australian who cannot conceive the number ten. Have we not come up thru that phase ourselves? Think for a moment how much each of us has improved since early youth. We look back with the realization of lessons learned, of increased regard for truth, of sympathies broadened, of understanding deepened, of a larger humanitarianism. We know that we are vastly more self-controlled, that we are more thoughtful of others, less insistent on selfish ends, and that our love continuously becomes more inclusive. But even with a great degree of concentrated effort, we could not, in so limited a time, develop from the state of primitive man to the most exalted type of civilized man today.

Many in adult years wish the chance to relive their lives with the added increment of character they know they have acquired; they look back regretfully, "If I had only understood!" It now seems evident to me that this is the chance Nature gives us. But it takes place only after we have digested and assimilated into our permanent Egos all of the good to be extracted from every experience of the past life.

At the completion of this condition of existence in Devachan, we are told that the Ego begins its return journey to earth for fresh experiences necessary to further growth. Its new life on earth will be another obstacle race; it will take up the burden of overcoming; it will have renewed opportunity to pit itself against temptations in whatever guise, arrayed against its spiritual progress. It is its chance to wax mighty in power to conquer the temporal and to win the permanent.

" As the Ego returns to earth he gathers up the burdens of his past . . . . these germs or seeds coming over as the harvest of the past life. They consist of material qualities, sensations, abstract ideas, tendencies of the mind, mental powers, and while the pure aroma of them attached itself to the Ego and passed with it into Devachan, all that was gross, base, and evil remained in the state of suspended animation. These are taken up by the Ego as he passes outwards towards terrestrial life and are built into the new ' man of flesh ' which the true man is to inhabit."[139]

At death, as we have learned, a panorama of the life finished passes in review before the consciousness of the soul. Before the unconsciousness that precedes a new birth for a short space of time, it is taught, the Ego becomes conscious on the higher spiritual planes. It then sees passing before it the main events of the coming life which, in the next needed steps for progress, are to serve as a background for the necessary tuition. It perceives amends it must make to expiate actions in previous earth-lives and recognizes the obstacles to be overcome. At this time of enlightenment, it is fully aware of the self-control to be exercised, the will-power to be exerted, and it knows the character to be

[139] Annie Besant in *Death and After*

acquired if it is to make the most of its coming opportunities.

When our "summons come to join the innumerable caravan," what would it be to face failure, to realize that we had been too indolent to obey the inner promptings of the Higher Ego! We who felt the inner urge to exercise our faculties and our will-power, but who neglected opportunity after opportunity—neglected to cross out obligations from the debit side of our account with Nature! To become conscious that we had practically wasted one round of earthly existence would be an overwhelming tragedy!

As Balzac says, "A life time may be needed merely to gain the virtues which annul the errors of a man's preceding life."[140]

Our intellects and morals are of slow evolution, but once unfolded are permanent possessions of the Ego. "The virtues we require, which develop slowly within us, are the invisible links that bind each one of our existences to the others—existences which the spirit alone remembers, for Matter has no memory for spiritual things. Thought alone holds the tradition of the bygone life. The endless legacy of the past to the present is the secret source of human genius."[141]

Every one comes back with the same characteristics that were his when he departed from the last earth-life, but with a thousand years, more or less, of existence based upon it.

"The life here on earth is called the period of causes and that immediately beyond, the period of effects, for it is the life on earth that determines the life between incarnations."[142] And, too, "the sum of the merit or demerit in preceding incarnations determines the following rebirth."[143]

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[140] Balzac in *Seraphita* [141] Balzac in *Seraphita*
[142] James Pryse in *Reincarnation in the Old Testament*
[143] Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy*

When we eat a meal, we digest the food, assimilate it, and it becomes woven into the skin, flesh, bones, blood, and tissues of our physical bodies. Something of the sort has happened in between earth-lives. Everything good is assimilated and woven as faculties, powers, and capacities into the permanent Spiritual Ego. There are lessons learned and a tremendous increase of wisdom stored within the Essential Self; these will be at the disposal of the Ego in the life ahead. The Essential Ego always remains the same entity, but it wears different garments; that is to say, it takes on different personalities at each rebirth. The memories of these personal lives is contained within the Spiritual Ego and when the individual has evolved to spiritual heights, they are recalled as moving along in one continuous existence.

The experienced soul, then, is born anew of parents who can offer him for his coming physical body suitable physical material appropriate to his special requirements and deserts. "Being good, I came into a body undefiled," as it says in the Bible. Each is attracted to surroundings fitted to teach him the fresh lessons he needs to learn and amongst those Egos who hold for him strong attachments of love or hatred. Family groups are said to be composed of individuals who have in former lives been closely associated. As "spiritual holy love is immortal, Karma sooner or later brings all those who loved each other with such spiritual affection to incarnate in the same family group."[144]

It will be seen now, I believe, that Esoteric Science teaches that natural tendencies in every human being born into this world are those which have been ingrained into the permanent character by effort exerted in former lives. The habit of those who try to avoid undertaking anything that "does not come

[144] Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy*

natural " stultifies further development. The pure reasoning necessary in higher mathematics, for instance, lifts the mentality into realms of extended percipience and the study of mathematics is, consequently, what those who find it difficult need. It must be conquered in the present to become " natural " in the future. The degree of advancement made in each life is entirely due to the individual himself.

Again, let me say, everything visible and invisible is governed by law; there is no hit or miss in nature. Look about you and you will see physical bodies housing souls—souls ages and ages old with eons of experience. Each is a free being thinking as he will; but, remember, acting in line with his thoughts. No two since the beginning of time have thought alike or done alike; each is the product of his own making. That is why there are no two individuals identical in character. What any person is, determines the conditions into which he is attracted; this works according to law; he is attracted to his special environment as inevitably as are iron shavings, within its field, to a magnet.

We find ourselves here endowed with all we have earned in the past—nothing more, nothing less. At this stage it is incumbent upon us to increase our capacity. Nothing that we learn is lost; nothing that we do is done in vain; every worthy attempt we make in any direction counts—brings us nearer to the future triumph of spiritual perfection. It is our chance, here, now, at the present moment, to weave new powers into the fabric of our eternal Spirit.

# XLV

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

## Conscience

A LITTLE child is born; this special baby laughs and coos the days away. With his innate sweetness, intelligence, strength, and beauty of character, he develops into a charming personality. Why? His is a spirit into which seems to be woven the brightness of the sun, not because originally in other lives he had a better chance, but because in other lives he elected to obey his conscience. As a result he created for himself better conditions. Thru the exercise of his intelligence, unselfishness, and love, he made good use of his opportunities as they came.

The Ego returns to earth-life. This permanent entity takes upon itself a new personality whose character is identical with that of its last personality as it left the physical plane. The physical body made of matter, an outer, outer, outer manifestation of Spirit—Spirit " thrown out of solution "—is its abode. The action of the inner Central Spirit—Spirit in its essence—is muffled and dimmed. With heavy gloves on the hands, it is difficult to manipulate the delicate parts of a tiny watch. With the heavy material garment thru which the soul must function, the manifestation of the Higher Individual is impeded. In this coarsest sublimation of Primal Substance, it is difficult for the person to perceive his relationship to Divine Principle.

The effort to rise out of an earthly state, thru the difficulties of living, into spiritual perfection must be made on the physical plane. It is said that the lessons needful for man's redemption can be learned and mastered in no other way than a life on earth.

Conscience dictates the way; if unheeded, it ceases to impress itself upon the attention.

All that has happened to the Spiritual Ego between earth-lives contributed to its permanent reservoir of wisdom. The Spirit, the Divine Part within, is the sum of all the good, of all the knowledge, of all the capabilities accumulated by its various personalities. Each personality is thrown out from the Higher Self as a ray of light from the sun, and all powers gained by the external self are absorbed by the Permanent Spiritual Being at one's center. It is this Higher Self who is the Monitor that suggests, urges, and attempts to guide the outer conscious self. Its voice is *conscience.*

Weakness, faults, still the voice of conscience. So good a man as Cotton Mather acquiesced in sending "witches" to a cruel and untimely death. How could it be that the accumulated wisdom of all his former lives did not deter him? In him there was something stronger than conscience. Whatever had been his life histories, there had been no experience vivid enough to break thru the power of his dogmatic belief. Obstinacy, opinions held jealously against all reason overcome conscience and still its admonitions.

When I was a little girl my mother had a superb fuchsia which one night was stolen from our front steps. More than twenty years later, my brother had a letter from the man who had taken it; never in all those years had his conscience allowed him to rest content. Might he send us the money, the interest, and what did we think it was worth? Would we then feel satisfied? He was fully reas-

sured by my brother, who told him to settle the sum himself and give it to some hospital.

Imagine his state of mind! Any time when his work was finished, his conscience was likely to remind him of his past sin. Any time when his mind was not focused on definite accomplishments, when he relaxed to sleep, the disagreeable memory would recur—Conscience was on duty! Conversation on theft, reading of robberies were but the opportunities seized by his glorious conscience. He had no misdirected power of will to still its voice and in him Conscience fulfilled its heaven-born mission—to direct toward constructive living in cooperation with God's plan.

Who of us has not underestimated its mission? Who of us has not suffered the pangs of a violated conscience? Is there any feeling more hopeless or depressing! It is infinitely simpler in the beginning to make the required efforts to accomplish its dictates. If for a week every one on earth would act in response to conscience, in that time we should forge ahead decades.

Conscience, under ordinary conditions, is clear enough; it is our warring propensities and desires that conflict with its findings. It is the messenger that runs between the superconscious or Higher Self and the every-day conscious self, and which bears communications from a higher plane of existence—it is our link between the world of Spirit and the world of matter.

It has occurred to me many times that were people less insistent upon their rights and more keen about their duty, there would be less trouble and more content. And Conscience declares our *duty*—that moral obligation to do or refrain from doing. The Great, the Pure, the Best that there is in our constitution as human beings, proclaims it. Freeing ourselves from the demands of self, we have but to

listen intently to know what is right and what is wrong. The sense of duty stimulated by Conscience finds its source in that accumulated wisdom of the individual which is the outcome of ages of living. Duty! It is the call to arms; it instigates courage; it is an imperative demand on the outer man to conform to the inner divine; it forbids its betrayal thru submission to the insistent longings of the earthly self; it forbids its betrayal thru intolerance, intellectual vanity, and selfish ambitions. He is miserable indeed who ignores its claims, and ah! he is wise who at whatever cost to personal cravings obeys its impelling force. When we realize the origin of Conscience, what wonder that in the name of duty, men and women are incited to rise to sublime heights of self-sacrifice and service.

# XLVI

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

## Reincarnation

HOW does Esoteric Science account for one of the deepest of puzzles—the vast inequalities at birth!

Here we see a slow, dull intellect in a gross body, and there a brilliant, keen mind in a lithe, refined frame; here, a sunny, amiable, good-tempered soul, there, a depressed, gloomy, disagreeable disposition; here, a human being naturally and easily good, there, one natively tending to evil. A musical genius appears in one family, a man who cannot recognize a tune in another; here we see an artist, there, a man who is deficient even in a sense of the beautiful. Morality is woven into the fibre of some, immorality into that of others.

Even in the same family—divergence. One member beams at you from the cradle while from another it is difficult to coax a smile. As children of the same parents grow older with the same background and the same care, one shows amazing self-control, another an astonishing loss of temper. To one the comprehension of mathematics is swift and smooth, and to another slow and difficult. One son is apt in mechanics, another in science, a third in language.

And what of the variations at birth in environments? What can account for the appearance of this bright, sunny boy born amidst squalid surroundings, and the arrival of this lazy, head-strong youth in those of delicacy and refinement?

We have been making a study of life from various angles. We have found within all forms—everywhere—the presence of Intelligence. We have found evidence of an intelligent evolutionary plan working thru both physical and psychical nature. The identical Creative Intelligence is revealed in each. Law governs in the soul realm and the physical realm equally—law disclosing the Divine Plan for the Evolutionary unfolding of the human family. We have followed the findings of Science which have led us to invisible realms whose vibrations play upon us unperceived; our physical senses do not respond to them. But do we find evidence of senses that do respond to finer vibrations than the physical? We have proven the existence of an extension of consciousness in advance of man's ordinary state—it forms the basis of our inspirational literature! Those who have attained to the larger consciousness assert facts observed by additional faculties—truths that illumine the meaning of life; *we find that the revealed facts of esoteric science and religion inspire us to a more practical Christianity.*

Our Supermen bear witness to one momentous, far-reaching truth that clears away perplexities—that illumines our understanding of life. It is this: We are not here on earth for the first time! "Before and behind, births and deaths."[145]

There are comparatively few yet who have made a thoro study of occult wisdom; we will therefore see what we can find in our own literature to substantiate the fact of Reincarnation.

Reincarnation is explicitly taught in all great religions except that of the Jews and Christians. It is referred to in ours. In the Kabala—which reveals hidden meanings of the Old Testament—reincarnation is asserted as a fact. In the early

[145] Horace Traubel

Christian church, reincarnation was taught in " The Lesser Mysteries."

Now there is a prophecy to be found in Malachi 4:5 about the return to earth of Elijah: " Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and dreadful day of the Lord." The full significance of this bursts upon us when we recall what Jesus said to the multitude concerning John. " But what went ye out to see? " he asked. " A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses. But what went ye out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee . . . . . And if ye will receive it, this is Elias [Elijah] which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear let him hear." Matthew 11:4 and 15.

After the transfiguration of Christ—Peter, James, and John, his brother, came down together with him from the mountain. And when these disciples asked him concerning John the Baptist, Jesus answered: " But I say unto you, That *Elias is come already,* and they knew him not. . . . . and the disciples understood."

Jesus was Superman and more. He knew. He was a " Master " with his latent senses developed. He asserted reincarnation—that Elijah the prophet had come back to earth as John the Baptist.

The disciples were students of hidden truths. They questioned Jesus with a background of knowledge unknown to the masses. This is what they asked him: " Who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind? " St. John 9:2. If a man had not lived before, how could he have sinned?

The fact that Jesus did expound doctrines

reserved for his disciples is plainly stated in Mark 4:33, 34.

" And with many such parables spake he the word unto them (the people) as they were able to hear it. But without parable spake he not unto them: and when they (the disciples) were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

The fact of special teaching is mentioned by St. Paul in a letter to the Corinthians—2:6-8.

" Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world . . . . . But we speak the wisdom of God *in a mystery* even the *hidden wisdom,* which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."

Jesus taught " as they were able to hear it "; he clothed spiritual truths in simple language comprehensible to his listeners of that time. Were he here in the flesh, he would speak to us today as we are able to hear and understand.

God is good *to those who seek* higher knowledge. Now that we are prepared in larger numbers to know and are ripe for hitherto hidden truths, more is given—as much as we can bear.

*Josephus* spoke concerning the power of the virtuous " to revive and live again "; he asserted " the return of souls into new bodies."

*Hume* said " Metempsychosis is the only system of immortality that the philosopher can harken to."

*Schopenhauer* wrote: " We find the doctrine of Metempsychosis springing from the earliest and noblest ages of the human race, always spread abroad upon the earth as a belief of the great majority of mankind—nay, as the teachings of all religions, with the exception of the Jews and the two which have proceeded from it; in the most

subtle form however, and coming nearest the truth in Buddhism."

"Various eminent sages are said to have remembered some at least of their previous incarnations; and notably, Krishna, Pythagoras, Plato, Appollonius, and the Buddha Gautama,"[146] This last—the "Messenger" who said: "Let the sins of the whole world fall on me that I may relieve man's misery and suffering."

"And it was he who fulfilled for the mystics of the East the part which six hundred years later was, for the mystics of the West, fulfilled by Jesus. It is stated that he recovered the recollection of five hundred and fifty of his own incarnations. And the chief end of his doctrine is to induce men so to live as to shorten the number and duration of their earth-lives. 'He who in his lifetime,' says the Hindu Scriptures, 'recovers the memory of all his soul has learnt is already a god.'"

These supermen had become sufficiently purified to have reached an exalted stage in their spiritual development. Their conscious memory had been lifted to a higher level—that of the Inner Spiritual Ego—and its contents had been revealed. They had fulfilled the conditions necessary to come into the knowledge of their past experiences as different personalities in former lives—separate chapters in one book. Each personality had been a putting forth from the same Individual Ego—the Higher Self—behind and above observant of its offspring. The complete passing person represents "the combined force of the manifold consciousness of the past lives polarized and centralized into an indefeasible unity."

Blavatsky says, "as any point has many rays, so the Spiritual Ego is raying out the one ray of your present conscious self, a part of the whole."

[146] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

And, as explained in "The Perfect Way," "The soul of an individual is the complete sum to date of all that has ever formed his conscious experience in whatever personality into one unified whole."

People do not remember their past lives, says Annie Besant, "because they are not yet conscious in the causal body as a vehicle; it has not developed functional activity of its own. It is there, the essence of their lives, their real "I", that from which all proceeds, but it does not yet actively function, it is not yet self-conscious, tho unconsciously active, and until it is self-conscious, fully self-conscious, the memory cannot pass from plane to plane and therefore from life to life."

Reincarnation was taught by *Pythagoras, Plato,* and *Plotinus*—all men who had developed their innate faculties thru which they widened their field of observation and experience. It was a part of the doctrine of the *Christian Gnostics.* It was taught by *Fichte,* by *Lessing, Herder, Paul Leroux,* and *Jean Reynaud. Ovid* believed in rebirth, and *Victor Hugo,* and *Swedenborg.*

Literature is rich in its expression of this fact. I confess, however, that in early days at school, when I learned the following, its real significance escaped my understanding:

"Build me more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell on life's unresting sea."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes in "The Chambered Nautilus."

*We will see as we proceed how the truths asserted by esoteric teaching illumine the meaning of great writings.*

What could be more explicitly expressed than the following from *Dryden:*

"Souls cannot die. They leave a former home
And in new bodies dwell and from them roam.
Nothing can perish, all things change below,
For spirits thru all forms may come and go."

As *Robert Browning* said, "Delayed it may be for more lives yet through worlds I must traverse not a few."

And *Walt Whitman,* "Believing I shall come again upon the earth after five thousand years." And again, "No doubt I have died ten thousand times before."

And *Edward Carpenter*, "Do you understand? To realize Freedom or Equality—for this hitherto, for you, the universe has rolled; for this, your life, possibly yet many lives; for this, death, many deaths . . . . ."

*Wordsworth* beautifully expresses it in his "Intimations of Immortality":

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar."

*Lafcadio Hearn* describes with infinite pains, in careful detail, the contents of a series of documents "very much signed and sealed" found in the library of Count Sasaki in Tokyō.

These documents all concerned the case of a little Japanese boy, Katsugorō.

"Elder sister," he said one day while at play, "where did you come from before you were born into this household?"

Tosa answered him, "How can I know what happened to me before I was born?"

He said, "I used to be the son of Kyūbei San of Hodokubo and my name was then Tozo." He remembered that he had died of smallpox when in his sixth year, and that three years later he had come to this house to be born.

He told his grandmother that until he was four years old, he remembered everything that had happened to him when he was Tozo, but that as he grew older he was becoming more forgetful.

When he was nine years old, his grandmother started off with him to investigate the truth of these memories. When they arrived at Hodokubo in the District of Tamazōri, his grandmother asked:

"Which house is it, this one or that?"

"No," replied Katsugorō, "it is further on, much further."

Reaching a certain dwelling at last he cried:

"This is the house!" and ran in without waiting for his grandmother.

Everything that he remembered was found to be a fact.

"This used not to be here," he cried, upon seeing the roof of a tobacco shop, "and this tree used not to be here!"

The mother of Tozo said that Katsugorō looked precisely as he had as Tozo except that now he looked older and handsomer. Katsugorō was now nine. Tozo had been born 1805 and died after his fifth birthday in 1810. He remembered the people whom he had known as Tozo—none of the others who had come since Tozo's death.

It is a common occurrence—an intuition of familiarity with an experience known never to have happened previously in this life. "Some time before this, I have been in this exact situation." And somehow this fact has touched the deeper memory of a distant past; just a touch and it is gone.

## A Creed by John Masefield

" I hold that when a person dies
His soul returns again to earth;
Arrayed in some new flesh disguise,
Another mother gives him birth,
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
The old soul takes the road again.

" Such is my own belief and trust;
This hand, this hand that holds the pen
Has many a hundred times been dust
And turned as dust, to dust again;
These eyes of mine have blinked and shone
In Thebes, in Troy, in Babylon.

" All that I rightly think or do,
Or make or spoil, or bless, or blast,
Is curse or blessing justly due
For sloth or effort in the past.
My life's a statement of the sum
Of vice indulged, or overcome.

" I know that in my lives to be
My sorry heart will ache and burn
And worship, unavailingly,
The woman whom I used to spurn,
And shake to see another have
The love I spurned, the love she gave.

" And I shall know in angry words,
In gibes, and mocks, and many a tear,
A carrion flock of homing birds,
The gibes and scorns I uttered here.
The brave word that I failed to speak
Will brand me dastard on the cheek.

"And as I wander on the roads
I shall be helped and healed and blessed:
Dear words shall cheer and be as goads
To urge to heights before unguessed.
My road shall be the road I made:
All that I gave shall be repaid.

"So shall I fight, so shall I tread,
In this long war beneath the stars;
So shall a glory wreathe my head,
So shall I faint and show my scars,
Until this case, this clogging mould,
Be smithied all to kingly gold."

# XLVII

# PRACTICAL TRUTHS REVEALED IN ESOTERIC TEACHING

## Karma

IN Maeterlinck's " Blue Bird " exquisite children as lovely as angels, clothed in delicate sky-blue evanescent chiffon, represented Egos waiting eagerly to return to earth. When the ship came, expectantly they all rushed forward, each carrying a little bundle. But for many of the souls the time and conditions were not right, the privilege was postponed, and, watching the others sail away to earth, they were left behind.

In the bundle, each carried his Karma—the seeds of the harvest time garnered from his past life. Karma—the result of an inevitable, ever-with-us, changeless, eternal law of Cause and Effect. Each individual soul creates and is responsible for the causes; it is he who gives them birth. Karma—unerring in its absolute justice— governs the effect.

Every moment of our present life, by our thoughts, words, and acts, by the right or wrong use of our present opportunities, we are generating Karma " which from birth to death every man is weaving thread by thread around himself as a spider does his web."

" Karma—all that total of a soul
Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had
The ' self ' it wove with the woof of viewless time
Crossed on the warp invisible of acts."[147]

[147] Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia*

The Karma we are creating at present comes forth like noise or music as we turn the handle of our hurdy-gurdy of daily existence. In our next life we will be subjected to the effects of our performance; in this life we are suffering from and enjoying the fruits of our last earth visit; what we created then determined our lot now. It is Karma that ordains our present earthly personality which, as a tree, is known by its fruit. It is written that " the place of punishment for most of our sins is the earth—its place and playground."

" If the intelligent faculty should be rendered more comprehensible," remarked Coleridge, " it would require only a different and appropriate organization, the *body celestial* instead of the *body terrestrial,* to bring before every human soul the collective experiences of its whole past existences. When this has happened, the Ego sees for itself the unfolding of the effect from a former cause.

" Very good and holy men," it is taught, " see not only the life they are leaving, but even several preceding lives in which were produced the causes that made them what they were in the life just closing. They recognize the law of Karma in all its majesty and justice."[148] They can see for themselves that our virtues are links that bind together our existences.

Isaiah voiced the law of Karma when he said: " Woe to thee that spoilest and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee."[149] Isaiah 33: 1.

Every sin committed by every human being disturbs the harmony of Nature. Karma is the law of Balance; it restores a dislocated equilibrium and

[148] Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy* [149] Isaiah 33 :1

brings back the scales to a point of rest. It brings upon each human being circumstances that invite the predicament he was responsible for bringing to another. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."[150] And, as it stands in Revelations 13:10, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity, he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword."

"It seeth everywhere and marketh all;
Do right—it recompenseth! Do one wrong—
The equal retribution must be made."[151]

Karma is irresistible; it has been said that "it can neither be propitiated, nor turned aside by prayer." On the physical plane, the law of Falling Bodies is irresistible, and yet we do not hesitate to make use of other laws and dart forward to save a child from a fall. Karma attracts us to special environment; we do not have to stay there. Karma surrounds us, perhaps, with uncongenial associates; we can discharge our duty to them and seek new ones more to our taste. Karma attracts us to ill health; we can emerge from it.

A partial understanding of the law has led to hesitation in helping others lest there be interference with the beneficial effect of Karma. If it is consistent with our judgment, without regard to the law, we need never hesitate to relieve anybody at any time, for Karma will take care of itself. If it is opposed to one's Karmic harvest, some condition will arise to prevent help; the law needs no protection.

Certain definite conditions are due us; there must our fatalism begin and end. We may handle them as they come—at will. Their reception on our part depends entirely upon the sort of character we have

[150] Matthew 7:2 [151] Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia*

evolved for ourselves. Just as that which happens to us now follows from complex causes started in other lives, or in this immediate life, so our behavior today determines our future.

When we regard those about us who apparently play in hard luck, it is possible that in the ultimate counting, their luck may be better than ours. They at least are discharging old Karmic debts which, if accepted with intelligence and courage, lay the foundations for future happiness. Our success or failure in dealing with the contingencies which the law has brought to our door depends upon our character.

A man's character comprises the sum of his moral, intellectual, and spiritual qualities built up in the ages of experiences by his permanent Self in separate personalities. As Epictetus says, "What signifies to me anything that happens while my soul is above it? What shall disconcert or trouble or appear grievous to me? Shall I not use my powers to that purpose for which I received them; but lament and groan at every casualty?" An exalted character will transcend all Karmic difficulties. Karma determined our environment, but it is we who create our own Karma. Attractions and repulsions set in motion by ourselves settled our parentage, our opportunities. Karma, therefore, rests on this basic fact: It was our past character that brought about our present Karmic harvest; it is our present character that weaves the fabric of our future destiny.

"Such is the law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is love, the end of it
Is peace and consummation sweet. Obey!"[152]

[152] Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia*

## XLVIII

# THE GREATER AND LESSER MYSTERIES

WHAT is suggested to you when the Greater and the Lesser Mysteries are mentioned? Is it anything more than a hazy recollection of names? The Mysteries of the Hindus, the Chaldeans, the Mithraic Mysteries of the Persians, those of the Hebrews, Greeks, and the Early Christian Church.

That they contain the answer to the greatest riddles of life, that they include knowledge of startling magnitude, that they hold within their limits profound and divine wisdom, is unrealized. It is written in the Book of Proverbs: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding for the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all things that thou canst desire are not to be compared with it . . . ." "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding." The wisdom revealed in the Mysteries acts as a stimulant to the evolution of every individual who comprehends the deeper significance of life.

The Greater Mysteries, a system in which "Reason has in vain sought to detect a flaw," have been the foundation of all the world's religions; they are mysteries to the external, not to the inner man. The Lesser Mysteries are an introduction to and only a partial revealing preparatory to the teaching of the Greater.

The most information concerning "The Myste-

ries " is said to have been given out by two of the world's greatest teachers—Shrî Shankarâchârya and Gautama the Buddha. Their teachings, naturally, since the truth is one, are identical. *Ideas common to all religions exist because they are facts in truth and because the great leaders have been exponents of the same Divinity.* Each Great World Teacher is said to have reestablished the Mysteries or introduced them into regions into which they had not penetrated.

" Here also in India—wonderful, hidden— . . . .
Here also, hidden away, the secret, the divine knowledge.

" Ages back, thousands of years lost in the dim past,
A race of seers over the northern mountains, with flocks and herds,
Into India, the Wisdom-land, descended;
The old men leading—not belated—in the rear—
Eagle-eyed, gracious-eyed old men, with calm faces, resolute, calm mouths.
Active, using their bodies with perfect command and power—retaining them to prolonged age, or laying them down in death at will.

" These men, retiring, rapt—also at will—in the vast open under the sun or stars,
Having circled and laid aside desire, having lifted and removed from themselves the clinging veils of thought and oblivion,
Saw, and became what they saw, the imperishable universe.
Within them, sun and moon and stars, within them past and future,
Interiors of objects and of thoughts revealed—one with all being—
Life past, death past—the calm and boundless sea
Of deep, of changeless, incommunicable Joy.

" And now today, under the close-fitting layers of
caste and custom, hidden away,
The same seers, the same knowledge.
All those thousands of years the long tradition
kept intact,
Handed down, the sacred lore, from one to
another, carefully guarded."[153]

As Annie Besant says, " From time immemorial there had been a certain secret region in Tibet, which to this day is quite unknown to and unapproachable by any but initiated persons, and inaccessible to the ordinary people of the country as to any others, in which adepts have always congregated. But the country was not in the Buddha's time, as it has since become, the chosen habitation of the Great Brotherhood."[154]

The secret doctrine of the Mysteries—called the " *Gnosis" by Origen*—concerns the nature and destiny of man, " the mysteries of being, of life, death, and rebirth, and all have taught in their turn some of the facts so learned."[155]

The Mysteries in all religions are basically the same as taught by the Buddha and Shrî Shankarâchârya. There has been and is only one revelation of the divine truths of existence taught by divine men who have attained to the state of supermen. Its transcendental or spiritual knowledge comes thru the intuitional pathway, not thru any external world. It comes within the soul of the student of the Mysteries in a process of unfolding of higher organs of perception than the physical. Every Initiate has an experimental basis for his belief which cannot be said of the immature in spiritual knowledge.

Among the greatest mystics of the ages are:

[153] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*
[154] Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*
[155] Blavatsky in *Key to Theosophy*

Moses, Gideon, Isaiah, Shri Krishna, Buddha Gautama, Lao-tze, Confucius, Mithras, Zoroaster, Osiris. Socrates, Jesus the Christ, St. Paul, St. Timothy, Pythagoras, Sophocles, Plato, the Neo-Platonists, Plotinus, St. Clement, Origen, Mohammed, Roger Bacon, Dante, Boehme, Pascal, and Spinoza. These are all said to have been Initiates in some Great Brotherhood originating from the same historic source—"The Grand Lodge of Central Asia."

It taxes one's credulity to believe that God left humanity to struggle along by itself without divine light until the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul's testimony is to the contrary: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."[156] A careful study of the great religions shows them to be a part of a great plan to enlighten the world, and *Christianity is the latest great step.*

Similar characteristic incidents are recorded in the lives of different Spiritual Leaders. What can it signify except *an identity of import in dissimilar religions?* "Monuments and sculptures still exist showing that the entire story of the Divine Man of the gospels was *long before Moses* taught to communicants and celebrated in numberless colleges of sacred mysteries . . ."[157] "In such sculpture remains of remote times are found the crucifixion of Mithras, the infant Horus or Krishna in the arms of an immaculate mother, the resurrection of Osiris, and the ascension of Hercules." We must face the fact of these similar incidents having occurred in other lives than in that of Jesus the Christ. They must be the outer expression of fundamental, spiritual truths.

Jesus, our Great Master, came with teachings appropriate for the needs of the generation in which

[156] Hebrews 1 :1, 2 [157] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

he appeared. To those who were ready, he taught the hidden divine truth, the backbone of religion, that which explains and clarifies—that esoteric wisdom which is at once a science, a philosophy, and a religion. To those at a lesser stage of intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, he taught the Lesser Mysteries to prepare them for the Greater Mysteries. To the world in general, he was obliged to speak in parables; but when he was alone with his disciples, he expounded all things to them.

St. Paul's frequent reference to "The Mysteries" is familiar to Bible readers: "We speak the wisdom of God in a *mystery,* even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory."[158] And, "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the *mysteries* of God."[159]

There is ample evidence too, that St. Paul passed along "The Mysteries" to the next generation of Christians: He warns Timothy "to hold the *mystery of the faith* in a pure conscience." He bids him as follows: "The things thou has heard of me among many witnesses [in the presence of other Initiates] the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."[160] And yet accentuating the fact that these "Mysteries" are to be taught only to the faithful, he wrote, "O Timothy! keep that which is committed to thy trust."[161] "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."[162]

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was a disciple of St. John, "speaks of his fellow disciples as 'initiated into the mysteries of the Gospel with Paul'."[163] "Might I not write you things more full of mystery?

[158] I Corinthians 2:7 [159] I Corinthians 4:1 [160] II Timothy 2:2
[161] I Timothy 6:20 [162] II Timothy 1:14
[163] Those interested in following this subject in greater detail may read the chapter on the *Hidden Side of Christianity* in *Esoteric Christianity* by Annie Besant

But I fear to do so, lest I inflict injury on you who are babes."

In the second and third centuries, St. Clement of Alexandria, and his pupil Origen, who tell us the most about " the Mysteries " in the early church, make positive assertions as to their existence.

In the Stromata, or Miscellanies of St. Clement: " The Lord . . . allowed us to communicate these Divine Mysteries and of that holy light, to those who are able to receive them."

Origen wrote that the secret teachings of Jesus were preserved in the early church. He said that hidden knowledge was " not a peculiarity of Christianity alone, but also of philosophic systems, in which certain truths are exoteric and others esoteric."

It is interesting to ask, what became of these schools that taught the Lesser in preparation for the Greater Mysteries? What happened that they disappeared from the teaching of the Western world?

When there are no pupils fitted to receive the advance teaching of the Divine Mysteries, they disappear, that, in fact, is what is said to have happened in the history of Christianity. At the time of the disruption of the Roman Empire, Christians, too, became involved in selfish interests and were therefore in no sense eligible for spiritual instruction of the highest order. That which renews and nourishes the vitality of our religion, that Divine Wisdom, the " Gnosis," was, with few exceptions, withdrawn from the Western world.

In spite of the fact that the Western world has been bereft of the regulated, scientific training of the accredited members of the Great Brotherhood, it has had its mystics. There is no age, I believe, when we have been without them. Few of them, especially those who have become mystics thru contemplation alone, can measure up in grandeur of

being with those who are developed under the ancient scientific instruction of divine knowledge. Initiates proceed along a definite path of successive unfolding presented in orderly sequence. They are subjected to tests and are not allowed to continue till their characters are strengthened to pass them.

In an exhaustive, analytical treatise on "Mysticism," by Evelyn Underhill, the reader is left with regret that the mystics of our Western world could not have benefited by the systematic training of the Great Eastern Brotherhood who take no step forward till they are prepared to undergo the experience. Evil forces are on the alert to take advantage of an Initiate's least weakness. His vanity may be played upon, his pride, for in the absence of exact knowledge, pitfalls await him. A state of ecstasy that leaves him spent and irritable and nervous are unmistakable signs that something is wrong because the Initiate who is rightly instructed gains steadily in poise and tranquillity. His ecstasy is that of a strong spirit living on higher planes of reality. He is lifted into pure intellectual vision and moral exaltation; it leaves him with a deep inner grace and power.

Edward Carpenter in quoting from a Southern India Guru—a teacher of mankind who has himself reached the Cosmic state—writes: "There is a definite method by which the divine consciousness may be educed from the soul, but it is only in India that complete instruction exists on this point—by which a man who is "ripe" may systematically and without fail attain to the object of his search, and by which the mass of people may ascend as by a ladder from the very lowest stages to such ripeness."

However, the tradition of the Greater Mysteries has been perpetuated in our Western world; mystic teaching sprung from philosophic systems originat-

ing in Neo-Platonism. St. Thomas Aquinas—canonized in 1323 A. D.—came under this influence.

Two of the greatest of the Western mystics were Ruysbroeck and Thomas à Kempis who were "Friends." The Society of Friends—"true mystics and followers of the old tradition,"[164] owed their beginning to Eckhart, John Tauler, and Nicholas of Basel whose knowledge of the Mysteries can be traced back to Plato and Pythagoras.

In "The Perfect Way," we are told that the "sacred mysteries" pertain only to the soul and have no concern with phenomena or any physical appearance or transaction." As much as the authors experienced that they thought ought to be told, they relate; what they tell is of interest only to those who aspire to spiritual heights.

"The divine Mysteries" have always been held as a sacred trust, pearls not to be thrown before swine. To be ready for their teachings betokens a rigidly self-controlled, and divinely compassionate soul; to be accepted, it is necessary to have mental calibre, a lofty moral nature, and pronounced spiritual development. A few ardent searchers among the spiritually advanced of the race have delved into the deeper wisdom that transcends the ordinary knowledge of men. It is a body of truth that explains life, points to the goal, and shows the way.

[164] Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*

## XLIX

# QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADMISSION INTO THE MYSTERIES

IT was said by Spinoza that if the way that leads to Cosmic Consciousness "seems very difficult, *it can nevertheless be found.* It must indeed be difficult since it is so seldom discovered; for if salvation lay ready to hand *and could be discovered without great labor,* how could it be possible that it should be neglected by almost everybody? But all noble things are as difficult as they are rare."

I undertake to finish a piece of work begun by you; what is my first question? "How does your task stand to date?" If you wish to improve, your first move is to acquire an accurate estimate of yourself as you are now—what your frailties are, your deficiencies, errors, sins. If you persist in illuminating your character with the brilliant rays of self-satisfaction, how can you progress? A youth placed in a school is examined to see where he belongs. *This is your initial step.* Because from the beginning it entails energetic soul work—that is why so few develop within themselves their potential capacities and powers; they will not pay the cost.

At the outset the search for advanced knowledge needs be utterly unselfish—we may proceed only as we wish to share with others all that we gain. Let us suppose ourselves developed to a degree compatible with the awakening of inner possibilities. The fruit does not grow till the flower has run its course; first the flower then the fruit.

The qualifications for admission into "The

Mysteries " cover man's whole being.[165] Our attention is immediately directed to the vehicle of the soul and Spirit—the physical body—which must be carefully trained and its appetites brought under control of reason and will. The stoic path in the selection of food must be followed and the habit of overeating eliminated. It means a steady discipline of the lower nature in favor of the higher; there is no present hope for any slave to his senses—one who is making no effort to master them.

Complete and unbiased knowledge of ourselves—that is what we must acquire—and no indulgence nor palliations in defense of our shortcomings must blur the portrait! It must include our shams and our hitherto unacknowledged weaknesses. It is no mean accomplishment—to regard ourselves with unprejudiced mind.

Suppose after an honest examination I find in myself a tendency to stir up trouble, I find I am critical, pessimistic, and depressing to others; these are not permissible in a disciple—I must qualify. Suppose that you find it difficult to overcome inertia—unsympathetically called by your friend—laziness; it is impossible to remain so and accomplish the higher training. Another is careless or even cruel with regard to the well-being of animals—quite incompatible with a character seeking the spiritual life; gentleness, sympathy, and compassion must be extended to the animal as well as to the human being.

We who look forward to a participation in Reality should realize that the everyday ambitions, the longings of the earthly self, possessions, worldly success, fame—all tend toward the separation of souls; and we should realize that the longings of the inner self tend toward unity. It is impossible to reconcile them by compromise; the fight for self must

[165] For an expanded statement of the needed qualifications, the reader is referred to *The Path of Discipleship* by Annie Besant

end and whatever we have must be shared freely with all living creatures. Except as it ministers to the needs and happiness of others, we must become indifferent to wealth and power, purging ourselves from greed and covetousness. Purification from externals is a necessity; we must look higher for our happiness than thru the enjoyments of the flesh and earthly pleasures. The mystical character is one of singleness of heart; it is self-controlled, self-reliant, courageous, and selfless.

How are we to proceed to discipline ourselves that we may develop the strength required to overcome and to achieve these characteristics?

" Everything is under the law; you cannot obtain mental ability nor moral virtue by sitting still and doing nothing. You can attain both by strenuous and persevering thinking, ' for man is created by thought; what he thinks upon that he becomes, therefore think ' on that which you aspire to be, and inevitably it shall become yours. Thus shall you become a mental and moral athlete and your character shall grow rapidly."[166]

*In order to get the best out of life, what could we better do than to increase the creative capacity of our thought? As it develops the powers of the soul evolve.* Whatever our ambitions may be, our minds should be trained to definite thinking—" to the concentration and fixity of thought " called " meditation." We should learn to capture our own attention and direct it to our own selected ends. St. Theresa—one of the greatest of church mystics—says that the control of the attention begins in the deliberate and regular practice of meditation.

*Meditation* is the deliberate and sustained thought focused on one object. It is the act of turning over and over in the mind all the aspects of a single truth or quality until the consciousness is in a state to

[166] Annie Besant in *A Study in Karma*

receive intuitive knowledge of the thing in its essence.

Meditation is a short cut to the upbuilding of character; it creates vibrations in the invisible bodies of man which encourage and instigate the quality in queston. For instance, we meditate upon ourselves as being " balanced amidst friends and foes, balanced in praise and blame, looking on all things with an equal eye, on the clod of earth, on the pile of gold, on friend and enemy alike,"[167] for, if we are to qualify for the soul's advanced training, we must be the same to all. Our " love must be purified from its selfish elements." We thus create thought-forms that work for those ends and that tune our emotional and mental vehicles to the habit of such special qualities. When we meditate upon ourselves as sympathetic, optimistic, or helpful to others, in spite of the fact that we do not yet possess these characteristics—it is a process of educating ourselves to have them. Active thought-forms induce the person to exert himself in these respects; as the act is repeated, a habit is formed. Meditation—action; action repeated—habit.

The qualifications for admission into " The Mysteries " are mental and moral, and, altho meditation on all wholesome subjects is profitable, it is well to select to brood upon, some virtue that we lack but need. When the mind wanders from the ideal to which we aspire, and upon which we are meditating, it must be returned patiently to the original subject. At first this haphazard wandering happens to a discouraging degree, but when persistently followed for a few minutes a day, each day of the year, the act of meditation is not arduous. No one who sincerely wants to improve should hesitate to form the habit; for every individual who wishes to shorten the worst part of his pilgrimage it is a

[167] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship*

necessity. *Meditation "is the only healthy and sane way in which the unfolding consciousness may be definitely stimulated."*[168]

Thru the double process of carefully predemitated action and meditation, we, as would-be disciples, must slowly learn and win the required spiritual qualities—we must learn to eliminate self, to eliminate resentment for personal injuries. We realize that we all vary in stage of growth and we forgive completely. "Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time, hatred ceases by love . . . Forgive the injury: give love for hatred; overcome evil with good."[169] We must learn to discriminate between all that pertains to the transitory and all that pertains to the eternal, to act from a sense of duty with no thought of reward, to feel and to exercise infinite patience not only towards persons but things and events. Our tolerance towards all peoples, religions, and customs must be sustained, and resentment under no circumstance harbored. This more and more becomes natural if our love grows increasingly inclusive.

"The highest love asks for nothing back in return for what it gives; it seeks no gratitude; it asks for no recognition; it is willing to work unknown; nay, it is more glad to work unknown than in a way that brings recognition and that brings praise. And the ultimate purification of love is where that love becomes absolutely divine, where it gives because it is his nature to spread happiness, where it asks nothing for itself but seeks only that others may be glad."[170]

It is written that if year after year an aspirant earnestly and steadily holds to his purpose of character construction, if he is steadfast in his high pur-

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[168] Annie Besant in *The Changing World*
[169] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship*
[170] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship*

pose, if he continues to subject his thought, his activities to his will—he attracts the attention of a teacher on the invisible side of life. It is this teacher who tests his growth and tries him in the ordinary events of the day. Often a would-be disciple who believes himself struggling along alone, is, by such a helper, aided, sustained, and inspired.

And so a seeker after the higher life, confident in his teacher, confident in his own inner divinity gradually becomes a balanced soul—composed and suffused with peace. Fortunately perfection is not required—not till one is far, far on the path; nothing is demanded that is impossible to accomplish. To become qualified is simply a step-by-step advancement in the right direction. To enter upon this quest is to expend effort in a manner which is incomparable in the richness of reward and is to use time in a way that brings the most generous return in permanent values. If the world of men and women fully understood, they would be eager to give a large share of their attention to the real business of life!

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# MYSTICISM AND THE MYSTIC WAY

MYSTICISM is the science of sciences, the supreme and final course in earth-life of inner, spiritual experiences. It constitutes a training for the spiritual evolution of the human soul and requires masterly control of mind, emotions, and bodily desires. It demands rigid purity, selflessness, a liberation from material things, the growth of an all-embracing love, and an ardent passion for service. It achieves a progressive widening of consciousness, an enlargement of boundaries which unveil knowledge of life and being of unsuspected immensity. Its goal is with ultimates, with inner not outer realities; it is a process of intuitive unfolding. It develops complete mastery over the inner life, evolves Cosmic Consciousness, and consummates in the permanent union of man's soul-Spirit with Divine Spirit.

Buoyed up by aspiration for moral perfection, without hope of reward, the man or woman who purely for the sake of divine love undergoes the rigorous training necessary to accomplish this end is a *Mystic.* The road travelled, the gradual process of the achievement of Reality, is the *Mystic Way*—the Greatest Adventure of the human soul.

Investigation of the truths concerning superphysical regions is interesting. It is profitable to us as well as to those who have developed the faculties with which to perceive them, but *the superphysical is in the realm of material science* as surely as is the physical. The more we learn of material science on any plane the more reverential we become; the

acquirement of knowledge has its place in the scheme of evolution. And yet, *the vital quest of man —the one of immediate importance—is the soul's search for spiritual realities, the search for knowledge of how to travel the Mystic Way.*

Any human being sufficiently purified, disciplined, and selfless who fulfills the required conditions can, to the extent to which he is developed, travel the *Mystic Way.* These higher spiritual realities come to the soul in response to a sustained will, in an earnest, persistent, single-minded, self-forgetful search. "It is a wooing, not a critical study of Divine Reality." "This region of truth is not to be investigated as a thing external to us, and so imperfectly known. It is within us," said Plotinus. *It is impossible to know God thru the intellect;* it is contact thru the intuitions rather than thought. The development of the intellect is a *sine qua non* condition in the evolution of the soul, but spiritual realities transcend thought, transcend intellect. It is, in fact, difficult to translate them into terms of language. Words to describe these rare experiences have not yet been evolved. "When I undertake to tell the best I find," said Walt Whitman, "I cannot, my tongue is ineffectual on its pivots; my breath will not be obedient to its organs; I become a dumb man."

The Mystic Way has been found by the devotees of many religions; it is peculiar to none. *In each and all,* to those who are fully qualified, *it brings the same sequence of identical states of soul* and in the same simple order of psychological events. It is a systematic process of self-development. It comprises four distinct stages in which definite things must be accomplished whereby the human spirit unfolds, and each stage prepares for and consummates in one of the five Great Initiations.

The facts revealed concerning the Divine Mys-

teries are to minister to the needs of each individual soul and to lead to its redemption. Believe as you live—thru a process of evolution, the human being must be redeemed. But oh! the ordinary life of the average man or woman is an infinitely slow preparation for the Mystic Way.

It may be recalled that the sacred Mysteries were ages old when Jesus of Nazareth was born into this physical world. And yet, *the Initiate into the Mysteries before his time, underwent, and now undergoes, in his inner life, an individual, spiritual experience of universal truth, the principal events of which took place outwardly in the life of Jesus the Christ here on earth.*

That some such plan was being worked out in the life of Jesus is shown by his own words: When the Nazarene was seized, and Simon Peter drew out his sword and struck off the ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus said:

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus must it be?"[171]

The related circumstances incident to the birth of Jesus, for instance, *are symbolic of the nature of man's spiritual regeneration.* In the teaching of "The Mysteries," at their foundation, is the "Immaculate Conception," at their summit, the "Assumption." The immaculate soul generated in the womb of matter is the "Immaculate Conception." The birth of the spiritual consciousness in the soul is the "Virgin Birth." The consolidation of the soul with the Spirit—at the climax of human development—is "The Assumption."

*We must remember—in considering what happens to the Mystic travelling the Mystic Way—that eventually it will be our way.* While we dawdle

[171] Matthew 26:53

along the road wasting time, taking side paths only to return to the main highway, the Mystic is going serenely at top speed. He knows whither he is headed and why; few of us take the trouble to find out, so we blunder along and take our bruises. It is the Mystic who has had the vision of the goal and who is concentrating his efforts to reach it: he will do it in a few lives, the rest of us in eons of time.

His potential faculties and powers begin to unfold and blossom—why? Because daily he increases in thought control, mind control, and in his ability to meditate. That upon which he meditates rewards him with an inner revelation of itself, but in feeling rather than in thought. He becomes aware of new delights, unexpected joys, and lovely revealments disclosed by Nature; he becomes aware of hidden forces, hidden meanings in all created things. He perceives all with simple and clear vision. As experienced by William Wordsworth: "While with an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things." It is thus that the soul of the Mystic becomes gradually illumined enabling him to behold the innate beauty of creation. He realizes for himself that all life is One and he experiences a sense of oneness with all living creatures. He becomes increasingly sensitive to all that is great and good in every human being.

Definite inner changes and qualifications and a degree of purification are necessary to prepare him for what is called the first Great Initiation. An Initiation is an examination or test of the candidate's increased powers, strength of will, and his newly acquired breadth of character—and more. The Mystic Way is the path along which the divine aspect of man is developed; it is the birth and growth of the Divine in the human soul. Every human creature in the age-long process of his evolution, at

some period, undergoes the Five Great Initiations which the Mystic aims to achieve in the least possible time.

*The First Great Initiation* is what is called in the Christian religion " the Birth of Christ " in the soul; in other religions, other terms are used for this divine spiritual experience. It is the " second birth " and constitutes the first step in man's divine state. One is " born into the kingdom of heaven " as one of the " little ones," as a " child "—" the names ever given to the Initiate at this stage of growth ". It is an ascent into the rare atmosphere of Cosmic Consciousness; as St. Paul said, " My little children of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you."

" This birth takes place generally during full consciousness, in the astral body, while the physical body lies entranced."[172] Once reborn, the change has irrevocably taken place forever. One's progress may be slow or swift, thru one life or many, many lives here on earth, but the status of the soul that has once experienced the " second birth " is in advance of that before the First Great Initiation.

Between the remaining Initiations, the capacities, qualities, and powers necessary to achieve in preparation are to be attained in their perfection. The next following Initiation is not possible until by untiring effort these definite improvements are made.

Before the Second Great Initiation, then, there are indicated faults to eradicate, self-control to acquire, and definite habits to form. For instance, a perfect sympathy and understanding of the feelings of those with whom one is in daily contact must be accomplished; the aspiration and light of the inner consciousness must be expressed in the outer life. It is written that the Mystic must get rid of the illusion of himself as a separated entity—as divided off from

[172] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship*

others as our material bodies would make it appear. A most difficult state to acquire, it would appear—to feel himself an integral part of the One Self which is identical for everyone—but he is aided by the fact that each Initiation brings about an added state of consciousness. Each is an introduction to a higher level of things known at first hand; consequently it is simpler to realize the particular truths necessary at any particular stage of preparation.

One of the most amazing experiences occurs when the Mystic finds that he is not the limited person he believed himself to be! He actually comes to know this outer creature to be only one of the many personalities that have been put forth by the Spiritual Ego—the Higher Self which remains the same Center during all the earth-lives. This real, vital Ego—distinct from his former recognized self—is the exalted, permanent Entity, that original " portion of the essence of God " individuated thru the process of eons of time. He also acquires positive knowledge of the truth of Reincarnation, the law of Karma, and the existence of divine men who are the leaders and teachers of humanity. He perceives that all religions are from God and appeal to different tastes and to men and women at all stages of progress. He realizes, too, that each soul must ascend beyond the need of external rites and ceremonies and must depend upon the living Spirit within.

Before the Second Great Initiation, The Mystic descends " into the waters of the world's sorrows, the river that every Savior of men must be baptized in." At the climax he is bathed in a new flood of Divine Light—and this is

*The Second Great Initiation.* It coincides with the " Baptism " in the life of Jesus—" the Baptism of the Christ by Water and by the Spirit."

The Initiate is inundated in the full glory of

Divine Elixir, and experiences the quintessence of spiritual ecstasy; no earthly joy can suggest it. He feels himself a veritable son of God—an outlet for the Divine Life and Will.

From now on, he must be capable of unmeasured service to humanity, and at this stage of his evolution, if he has not already done so, he must develop his innate powers. Up to now, they have been obstructed by his attitude toward the world of matter; he redeems matter in that he makes it a pure, free vehicle of Spirit. He learns to use spiritual forces not only on the physical plane, but on the emotional and mental planes. He learns to communicate " with conscious and deliberate attention from mind to mind ". His impassioned service is an enlightened one. Freely he gives out true spiritual wisdom —and to all alike, rich, poor, elevated, or degraded, to the hopeful and to the desperate—all are recipients of his radiant kindness. He learns the art of healing; he heals bodies and souls for thru him is poured forth Divine Light. His is the life of love.

According to the teachings of occult science, there lies in the region of the heart an organ of the emotional (astral) body. Within this organ resembling a lotus flower in shape, is a vital element called the " fire of Kundalini." Already the Mystic has learned to control currents that come from the etheric body. Now he must bring into life " this fire of Kundalini—an element of finer matter which flows outward from this organ and streams in luminous loveliness thru the self-moving lotus flowers and the other canals of the evolved etheric body. Thence it radiates outward on the surrounding spiritual world and makes it spiritually visible, just as the sunshine falling upon surrounding objects makes visible the physical world. How this fire of Kundalini in the astral organ at the heart is fanned

into life, may form only the subject of actual occult training. Nothing can be said of it openly."[173]

This living fire gives to the Initiate the power of leaving his physical body at will " to carry out any of the Master's work in the astral and mental planes."[174] In full consciousness, he can work now in these other worlds. Since all the barriers between the visible and invisible worlds are broken down, he is ready for

*The Third Great Initiation.* This, in the life of Jesus, was the Transfiguration on the Mount when " his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."[175] The glory of this new transcending experience of the soul was visible to his companions; and Jesus " was transfigured before them."

The same glory descends upon all human beings who reach this stage of advancement. Such a one has climbed to vast heights and has become an exalted being. When he will have progressed thru this Initiation, he will be actually conscious of his oneness with the Supreme Spirit; he will know that *all forms contain the One Spirit.*

" The myriad-formed disclosed, each one and all,
all things that are, transfigured."[176]

In thought, he will harbor not even the loftiest spiritual desires for himself as a separate entity; all that he has, all that he is, he uses for the good of humanity. A man who reaches this point of development confers immeasurable benefit upon the struggling world. " Nothing repels him—nothing drives him back. He is love and compassion to everything, love and compassion to all. He spreads around him an all-embracing circle of affection. All

[173] Rudolf Steiner in *Initiation and Its Results*
[174] Annie Besant in *Superhuman Men*
[175] Matthew 17:2
[176] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

that come near him, all that approach him feel the influence of his divine compassion.''[177]

The mystic's inherent strength must be tested at this stage by eliminating the last trace of selfishness; he is to be made perfect through suffering. Here on the mystic way is the unique, tragic trial of the soul in

*The Fourth Great Initiation.* This occurred in the life of Jesus when he turned his face toward the agony of the Garden of Gethsemane and Calvary.

*Let us remind ourselves that this is in the normal process of human evolution—approaching completion of earth-lives.*

> '' O freed soul! soul that has completed its relation to the body!
> O soaring, happy beyond words into other realms passing, salutations to you, freed, redeemed soul!''[178]

In His Garden of Gethsemane, the Initiate, in utter humility, reaches the condition called by mystics—'' self-naughting.'' '' It is clear that so drastic a process of unselfing is not likely to take place without stress. It is the negative aspect of ' deification,' in which the self, deprived of ' perception,' knowledge, will, work, self-seeking—the I, the Me, the Mine—loses itself—denies itself, unforms itself, drawing ever nearer to the One till ' nothing is to be seen but a ground which rests upon itself—the ground of the soul, in which it has union with God.' By being apparently alone, by feeling that one has lost God without, one shall discover the God within.''[179]

*Shall discover the God within*—five words covering an inner experience of surpassing wonder!

[177] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship*
[178] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*
[179] Evelyn Underhill in *Mysticism*

The Initiate willingly dies to the life of form, descends into hell that his understanding may include all, and rises again in a glorious resurrection—all necessary to His "*Redemption.*"

The surrender of the human will, of earthly desires, and of affections is called "'*The Passion*'; the particular act whereby the surrender is consummated and demonstrated—'The Crucifixion.' Crucifixion means a complete unreserving surrender —to the death, if need be—without opposition, even in desire, on the part of the natural man. Without these steps is no '*Atonement.*' The man cannot become one with the Spirit within until by his '*Passion*' and '*Crucifixion,*' he has utterly vanquished the 'Old Adam' of his former self."[180]

*The Fifth Great Initiation* corresponds in the life of Jesus, the Christ, to His Resurrection and Ascension.

The soul who has reached this Initiation has become pure. His Soul-Spirit unites with Divine-Spirit and brings about the birth of a Christ-Man—this is the Christ of the human spirit. "Christ in you the hope of glory"[181] blossoms into full stature. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."[182]

At last, in the *human being,* God as the Logos can manifest Himself "as a Christ." The Logos, Who is God expressed in substance—He Who is our Lord —He Who is *The Christ*—is individualized in man. Christ is the point of contact between the human being and God, the Lord. "It is at this point—Christ—that God and man finally lay hold of each other, and are drawn together. Thenceforth they flow as two rivers united, in one stream. The man is finally made in the image of God, and God as the

[180] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*
[181] Colossians 1:27 [182] II Corinthians 5:17

Lord, is eternally manifested in him making him an individual portion of Divinity Itself. Christ—the man made perfect, triumphant—*is the state of being which is the object of Christian teaching.*"[183]

It is the state of cosmic consciousness called by St. Paul " The Christ in you " and by Christ Jesus " the Kingdom of Heaven." It opens up to whomsoever it comes an inner region perceived interiorly —it is the permanent spiritual realm. It comes as a result of the descent of the Holy Spirit into the individuated soul; it is the coming into its utmost recesses of the " Prince of Love," the Lord of Heaven. It is an end of separation, yet a unity in which one's identity and memory are preserved. Experienced by the mystic John Ruysbroeck, he bears witness that in this union made by love, " *the creature is never confounded with God, never becomes God . . . The creature sees and feels between itself and God an eternal and invincible distinction.*"

And Jacob Behman said of this dazzling climax: " Suddenly . . . my spirit did break through—even into the innermost birth of the ' Geniture of the Deity ' and there I was embraced with a love, as a bridegroom embraces his dearly beloved bride. But the greatness of the triumphing that was in the spirit I cannot express either in speaking or in writing: neither can it be compared to anything, but that wherein the life is generated in the midst of death, and it is like the resurrection from the dead. In this light, my spirit suddenly saw through all, and in and by all creatures, even in herbs and grass, it knew God, Who He is, and How He is, and what His will is."

The above is the story of the Greater and Lesser Mysteries in bare outline. Their sacred secrets are alone for the Initiated. He who has passed along

[183] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

the Mystic Way to the end, has become a " Master of all powers—omniscient, omnipotent, on this planetary chain. *He has accomplished the evolution of humanity.* He has trodden the last step that mankind shall have taken when the work of this universe is achieved.'"[184]

Vast beyond our comprehension are the opportunities open to the Supermen of humanity; " the loftiest expression of man, the link which connects the visible to the superior worlds; he acts, he sees, he feels through his inner being."[185]

Among them are those who make the " Great Renunciation "—the Saviors who elect to stay within reach of this sinning human family. They exert their influence for the final liberation of mankind from repeated births and deaths; they are in the active service of our manifested Lord God.

[184] Annie Besant in *The Path of Discipleship* [185] Balzac

## LI

# THE DIVINE DRAMA

THERE is one feature of the inner experience of the soul along the Mystic Way that we have but touched upon. It is the acutely personal side of a relationship that constitutes the Divine Drama.

In this Divine Drama, the dramatis personae are two: God as the Logos manifesting Himself in and thru the Higher Self, and—*you!*

It was the aim of those scientific investigators—the alchemists—to enact this drama; it was the aim of the Hermetic philosophers. Indeed, it was "ever the ardent aspiration of the seeker after God in all times, and of all lands, whether Egyptian, Epopt, Hindu, Yogee, Greek, Neoplatonists, Arab, Sufi, or Christian gnostic."[186] It is the highest aspiration of the spiritually awakened in all religions today.

Whoever so wills may become an actor in this drama—a play concerned with the living of one's life. But the individual *must wake up and understand that the light of wisdom has something to show him.*

"Sweet are the uses of life.

The morning breaks again over the world as a thousand and million times before;

The light flows rippling in, and up to the window-pane, and passes thru and touches the eyelids of the sleeper.

It says: 'Come forth, I have something to show you.'

[186] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

And the sleeper arises and goes forth—and everything is the same as yesterday.

Then he says to the light, ' You have deceived me, there is nothing new here '—and he goes back sullenly to his chamber.

But the light is not huffed, but comes again the next morning (thinks nothing of the long journey across) and slips through the window-pane and touches the sleeper's eyelids as before,

' Come forth, I have something to show you.'

And again the next morning and the next, and the next.

And the sleeper wonders what the light would be at, but the latter says nothing—only fails not to keep his self-made appointment.''[187]

What the light has to show, this soul has not yet prepared itself to see; for in his waking hours he must lead a life of preparation. Before he is eligible even to the first act of the Divine Drama, he must find the secret spring of the door which only he himself can open.

What can we say of this Great Spirit in the Divine Drama Who descends to share with you His glory—He Who has prepared for you such wonders that eye hath not seen nor yet ear heard?

*He is God in His manifested, knowable aspect*—not the unmanifest, unknowable Universal Deity. In the Mysteries it is taught that God became manifest, entered into matter, took on the limitations, became the " Heavenly Man in whose Body all forms exist, of whose Body all forms are a part ". In the New Testament it is taught that He is the *Logos*, " the Creator and Sustainer of this universe—the Logos Who in Christianity was made flesh and dwelt among us ".

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[187] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

" Go, go, my soul, stream out on the wind with this one . . .

Go, shout on the winds that the world is alive, that the Arisen One controls it."[188]

In " Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching " it is said, " There is a level at which we find definitely in manifestation a Being from Whom the Christ principle actually emanates . . . There is a Specific Being at a certain level within the Divine Hierarchy of the Solar System to Whom we may definitely look up as the conscious Source of all spiritual influence ".

It is He—the Lord of Compassion and Wisdom—Who always stands ready knocking at the door of your heart. Without you he cannot play in your particular drama. He needs you; His world is perfected only with your assistance. He longs for the sign of your coming. He speaks: " Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come unto him, and will sup with him and he with me."

With startling suddenness the first act unfolds within your soul. Simultaneously with the opening of the door comes the consciousness of the Divine Presence spreading thru and permeating your being. Suffused with unmistakable spiritual force, you are lifted into a rarer atmosphere which refreshes and renews your soul.

The illumination experienced is added to the normal consciousness and is the outcome of spiritual contact with Supreme Spirit. Between acts, it is necessary to try to lay hold of this exalted state of consciousness—thru meditation and incessant appropriate daily living. It recurs during each act at a progressively advanced Initiation. This illumination transfiguring the consciousness seems to be the

[188] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

acme of human experience. But no! it is but the beginning of the Divine Drama enacted within the soul; the Ego is still a separated entity. Not till the conclusion of the last act when all the requirements have been met will the ascending and descending Spirit meet and unite. It is then that your Divine Drama is completed at the end of your journey along the Mystic Way.

Transcendental perceptions are manifested in the sublime heights of this earthly experience; we must beg audience with those who have lived the part—we must listen, compare, and weigh their assertions. What more is said of this Divine Being, this Lord of Wisdom and Love Who takes part in your Divine Drama?

St. Theresa—the Spanish saint of the sixteenth century—recognized in the Logos "not only the brightness of manifestation of Deity, but also the personal inexhaustible and responsive Fount of all life an Object of all love. Because humanity is taken up into the Godhead, the manifested Lord—the Logos—is the one and only bridge between the finite and the infinite, between the individual and absolute Life, hence in true Mystic language, the 'true bridegroom' of every soul".[189]

As the drama approaches its conclusion, the separated self finally becomes one with the Whole. Of the encompassing love that breaks forth from the individual to this Prince of Love, Edward Carpenter speaks in "After Long Ages":

"And the sleeper wonders whatever the light would be at, but the latter says nothing—only fails not to keep his self-made appointment."

Then after many years, after many thousands of years——

After many times lying down to sleep and rising

[189] Evelyn Underhill in *Mysticism*

again, after many times entering again into the mother's womb, after often passing thru the gates of birth and death—the sleeper says to him that wakes him:

"Ah! beautiful one, ah! prince of love, so many times with thy fingers in vain touching my closed lids!

Now at last thy love pouring in upon me has found an entrance, filling my body breaks the bounds of it, and bursts forth back again into the regions whence thou camest.

Ah! prince of love, lord of heaven, most beautiful one, of thee I am enamored and overcome with love;

Beholding thy beauty, hearing thy words thou sayest to me, being touched with the nearness of thy breath and the divine odor which exhales from thee —being sick, constrained with love, rending the chains which detain me——

Henceforth the long chain of births and deaths I abandon, I arise and go forth with thee—to begin my real life."

The end of the drama brings the completion of the growth obtainable on the earth plane.

The prophet Isaiah made this promise to the righteous:

Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty.

" Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," was the literal promise of Christ Jesus.

" Follow peace with all men, and holiness," said Paul, " without which no man shall see God."

And yet we recall it has been said, " No man shall see God at any time." " True, the *man* cannot see God. But the divine in man sees God. And this occurs when, by means of the soul's union with God, the man becomes one with the Father, and beholds God with the eyes of God."[190]

And therefore we may not be surprised to find at

[190] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*

the apex of the mystic union of Divine Spirit with the man's soul-Spirit—the union of God and the perfected man—that which is the crowning experience of the climax of the Divine Drama:

It is that stupendous event which happened to the prophets, to the mystics of olden and modern times that supreme beatific experience:

### The Vision of God as the Lord

Of this vision—The Vision of Adonai, as it has been called by seers—we can but quote the words of those who have beheld, and who are not bound by vows of secrecy:

"Enshrined in this light is a Form radiant and glorious beyond all power of expression. For it is made of the Substance of Light, and the Form is that of the 'Only Begotten,' the Logos, the Idea, the manifestor of God, the Personal Reason of all existence, the Lord God of Hosts, the Lord Adonai. . . . In constitution and form, Adonai is dual, comprising the two modes of humanity, and appearing to the beholder alternately masculine and feminine according as the function exercised is of the man or the woman and is centrifugal or centripetal . . . And whereas of these forms the inner is the feminine, the beholder learns that of the two modes of humanity, womanhood is the nearer to God . . . All of God which can be revealed, all that the soul can grasp . . . is revealed in Adonai."[191]

"The son of Man—yes, shall—appear in your midst. O beating heart, your lover and your judge shall appear . . . the Son and so equally the Daughter of Man."[192]

The breathless wonder and reverence of the vision is expressed by the mystic, Horace Traubel:

[191] Kingsford and Maitland in *The Perfect Way*
[192] Edward Carpenter in *Towards Democracy*

"The clouds part: O face—O face—O face! face smiling upon me—smiling me wings, buoyant beyond the discarded, cheapened present.

Divine Form—mother, father—sex only now stand revealed, the union irreversible:

Divine Form, I made whole in you,
The elements diverse here blended.

God! I am circled—I am drunk with the influx of life——

Wheeled in your orbit—given the word I would speak yet must withhold——

Leaving you, O my brother, each one, to say it for yourself:

O my questioner! you do not suspect me—you suspect yourself:

Tomorrow seeing yourself, you will see me.
And the illuminated spirit, passing the portal.
God-grown, will hail me proudly."

Thruout literature the inspired words of those who have completed the Divine Drama shine forth illuminating the way for those who have eyes to see! What wonder that the soul of man, yearning for the unknown, is led irresistibly onward and upward! Eager passionate prayer, unflinching courage in the acting of the part, daily waiting on God the Logos in silence, aspiration in meditation, reverence—create the forward, progressive, evolutionary movement in the Divine Drama. He who truly seeks with all his heart shall surely find. But in the sincere search all the soul's forces are focused to the one point to be achieved—coöperation with God's will in the living of one's life. This it is that leads to the identity in will and wisdom of wills human and divine and brings forth a glorified humanity.

## LII

# THE GIFT OF DAYS

NOW what has happened? We have momentarily withdrawn from the onrushing crowd of humanity to consider the meaning of life and its goal. We have passed from material science into the realities of Spirit and find there equally Law and Orderly Sequence. We have found ground for supreme optimism and have found incentive for living at the top notch of endeavor—gloriously.

It has been necessary for many of us to leave home and search for happiness thru the wide world. The experience has enlarged our total vision, it has enlarged our understanding of the stranger without our gate. Indeed, we have found that he is not a stranger at all, but our brother. The experience has cleared our sight to see the blue bird dwelling in our own homes. We find ourselves inexpressibly enriched from the journey; we thank God humbly that we were incited to start out on our quest for the Holy Grail. *For we have taken a tour thru the Great Religions of the World and in so doing we have arrived at the simple, basic, literal truths of our own Bible!*

We regard that sublime figure on the cross—Christ Jesus—with increased reverence. That Lord of Wisdom and Love! Not knowing what they did, they crowned this heaven-sent messenger with thorns and crucified him! He who had shown them —totally ignorant of the true source of Light—a method of escape from a soul-darkened life.

Jesus the Christ came to save the world from sin, sorrow, sickness—from all discord of the soul. He

came to renew the import of spiritual life, to accentuate things eternal. He came not to die in our stead—how could he when each individual must work out his own salvation along the lines that he himself laid down for us? It is unthinkable that Deity to be propitiated requires a vicarious shedding of blood! He came to enlighten us, to show us the next ascending steps in the onward march of the race—the way of peace and happiness. He lived and died that the world might enter the path of spiritual truth and spiritual understanding. " Seek ye the kingdom of heaven which is within " was among his paramount messages—a search which leads to an unfolding of the inner man leading to Cosmic Consciousness. This is the quest that leads to the goal of earth-life—the conscious union of every soul with its Divine Source—God.

The great inner hunger of the soul flows from the urge of Spirit—that Divine Spark glowing steadily within its Center. We search for satisfaction, but, to find permanent happiness, there is only one way for us—that is along the interior way of Spirit; for *it is within the soul—do not forget—that the Divine Drama is enacted.* It is in that inner region disclosed thru the intuitions. The Divine Life operates in man expressing Itself in spiritual experiences and the further we retreat inward the nearer we approach Spirit in Its essence. But the soul must subject itself to the higher spiritual direction. The supreme purpose in living should point to the climax mentioned—the conscious realization of the union of the human Spirit with the Divine! " This is the point at which humanity reaches the celestial and empties itself into Deity."

Every human being—without whom it is impossible to perfect the Divine Plan for the final good of humanity—is necessary to God; every human being is a unit in the Great Whole. The majestic plan

for the unfolding of the universe can be accomplished only thru the coöperation of the individual. Every human creature is charged with the responsibility of one person's growth and progress—his own; it is his duty to try to realize his own best promise, for otherwise he blocks the way.

The fact that God needs us, the fact that we are necessary to God's plan, constitutes us His agents; His is the plan, ours the will to carry it out. "Thy will be done," we pray, and we must elect that His will shall be done in us! By making this declaration we open the channel along which love, power, and light stream thru us from their Source. Without our coöperation, our days of sin, sorrow, and sickness are prolonged, it is thru us that God accomplishes His purpose. He needs us as His agents here on earth. Let us be about His business—the real purpose of living!

Here we are! a world of creatures that must be clothed, housed, and fed; therein is contained a large part of the world's work. Every human being has a possible sphere of usefulness. Whatever the activity, it should be done efficiently and beautifully if the soul is to enjoy the reaction of perfect work done. I feel that it matters little what the occupation, if it is done to the glory of God. A business man carries on the Divine Plan as truly as the preacher, physician, or teacher; but *he must serve to the limit of his capabilities, understanding, and conscience. His religion must be a composite part of his daily routine.*

Nature has instigated in us desires, likes, ambitions which are incentives to action; they stimulate us to the use of our faculties, and enlarge the capacities with which we are richly endowed. We are also provided with a place in which to exercise all our energies. We are fully equipped to advance in a scale of evolution, but on our part it requires alert

attention, intelligent and prodigious effort and upon this our true progress depends!

Life demands of us industry and productive labor, but it does not call for perpetual activity; a mind eternally occupied on the material plane blunders along like a ship without a rudder. There must be time for recreation and there must be time for high thinking and for relaxation. If we wish direction from the Invisible—we must " listen greatly " that the Spirit may have its way thru us.

We are all at present that into which we have built ourselves in the past—the product of our past choices, our lack of control or self-control, our use of opportunities from the beginning. We are at liberty to coöperate to achieve the ends of God; that depends entirely upon ourselves, upon the direction in which we exercise our forces. Our rate of advancement rests upon the intelligence, energy, and concentration with which we conduct our own evolution. It is not intelligent to ignore the Source from which all spiritual qualities spring, so let us regulate our lives with that in mind.

From experience we know that the initial move should be to get inspiration; there must be a daily looking up—prayer—communion with the Divine Whole to which we bear close relationship. When the soul is directed inward, and we unite our will with God's will to coöperate with Him as His agents —our intuitions bear fruit. To the limit of our capacity for opening up an unobstructed channel between ourselves and our Source—we reflect God; we reflect tranquillity, peace, love, forming a serene background for the day's living.

Wherever we are living our lives, whatever we are doing, shall we consciously ally ourselves on the side of the Divine Plan? Or is it to be first on the side of light and then on the side of darkness? Are we, perhaps, simply drifting? Are we daily thinking

thoughts that crucify love for our neighbor, deferring the day of happiness for all? Think of it! Every word that we utter is a help or a hindrance—every flash of impatience, every lie, every fit of depression; inertia when we should move, restrained impulse when initiative should be exerted—all are alignments on the wrong side. What an unfortunate waste of time and energy! All must be relived and righted.

Each day is a gift to us—to you, to me—providing the precious opportunity for us to get ahead. Difficulties make it possible for us to estimate increase in strength. If we look at it from the right angle, every obstacle is something against which one may test his intellectual, moral, and spiritual stamina.

"What advantage does a wrestler gain from him with whom he exercises himself before the combat? The greatest. And just in the same manner, I exercise myself with this man. He exercises me in patience, in gentleness, in meekness . . . Is my neighbor a bad one? He is so to himself, but a good one to me. He exercises my good temper, my moderation."[193]

Again and again we are confronted with the same lesson until we have conquered, and the effect of our triumph has been registered upon the soul; and then comes discipline along a new needed line.

After each sunrise comes the gift of a new day—a necessity of evolution. It is to use. Its hours provide us with time in which to check the lower nature by the higher. As the minutes pass, they give us the chance to master our thoughts, our minds. The gift of each new day brings fresh opportunities to meditate; rightly used, it brings immense satisfactions and rewards. "And the sufferings of the present time," we are told by St. Paul, "are not to

[193] Epictetus

be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."

The forces used in the feverish search for much of that which we believe to be indispensable to our happiness are misdirected. The material for our permanent content is not on the physical plane, but, as Jesus teaches, is within our own souls. It is unfortunate that thru frequent misunderstanding and often parrot like and flippant use the words and terms of Christianity fail to carry their meaning. We should see below the surface to renew our reverence and trust. The majestic truths need to be considered anew to set them to proper music; or rather, to set them back to their original song. Many passages in the Bible clearly discriminate between sham values and the permanent—the real. Are we to buckle down to the temporary and ignore the eternal? The divine in man must not continue to be bound by his physical nature, by ignoble desires, and aims; on the contrary, it must be freed.

The one, clear, uncompromising message shouted in the open by the great leaders of the world has always been—MORALITY—RIGHTEOUSNESS!

This is the immediate business to absorb the attention of humanity. Morality must come first, must become ingrained in the soul, must become the first fruit of the entrance of Spirit. Additional spiritual evolution is based upon this foundation. Upon morality is built the further constructive progress of the races of all times, their evolution into Divine men, their attainment of supreme wisdom, and their entrance into superior states of existence.

One lucid, unmistakable teaching of esoteric wisdom is that morality is an exact science. Within the kernel of every moral principle is enclosed the law of *Cause* and *Effect*. It is not to be escaped. Release a stretched rubber and it snaps back; one thinks, speaks, acts, and there is an inevitable

reaction according to an underlying moral principle. It is as exact as the laws that underlie mathematics. Therefore,the great passion of the Great Souls who have reached superior levels of spiritual growth is to teach *Morality* in its sense of *Righteousness,* to urge RIGHTEOUSNESS, to instill mightily into the hearts of men the imperative Evolutionary requirement—RIGHTEOUSNESS.

That is what they have done, what they have been stoned and crucified to the death for doing! They have sacrificed their lives to show man that the right way to God is along the path of Righteousness—the practice of right thought and right conduct in the performance of one's duty in daily living. What is the outcome of their holy zeal? There is no immediate rush to hasten our interminably slow evolution. Comparatively few are engaged in the whole-hearted effort for the constructive moral and spiritual growth that must be accomplished here on earth while in the physical body.

Indeed, most of us are satisfied with broad lines of principle waveringly followed. A man criticizes in utter defiance of the moral law and prides himself on his mental acumen; he eats with no regard to the needs of his physical body; he is self-indulgent in general. A woman relieves distress, but exercises her beneficence without sympathetic understanding, tenderness, and love; a man labors for the general good and yet constantly uses barbed wire words in bitter denunciation and complaint. Even among those who regard themselves as good—there is gigantic failure. This is true, too, in spite of the fact that man's destiny depends upon his character; he does not cultivate it to a fine degree. Our young people become specialists in art, music, architecture, chemistry, preventative entomology, and mechanical engineering, but in this day of specialties, there is a yawning chasm of specialists in righteousness.

*Life is a training school for this very purpose. There should be no cessation or relaxation in the effort to make good—the real reason why we are here!*

It is not as tho we had been left to blunder into the truth. Our religious teachers from the heights of a greater consciousness—themselves on a pinnacle of supreme righteousness—have shown us how to grow in beauty and in wisdom and in strength. The Gift of Days is to live the days righteously. This necessitates the daring to do; it means the elimination of fear, of dread. Dread—fear are calls to arms, instant necessities for action, for the exercise of courage. Courage to face odds becomes a habit and becomes progressively easier. The soul builds itself into a tower of strength. Determination to conquer obstacles, to exert oneself—that is why obstacles exist!

Our great need is tenacity of purpose to express the Divine will in our daily lives, and the more we perfect ourselves, to the greater degree may we hope to reflect God and may we hope to transmute His Spirit into the outer world.

What the leaders of moral wisdom have told us, we only partially absorb; it comes in one ear and emerges from the other. And yet—think of it!—even a thought has a definite effect upon the future of the thinker and on the future of the world! We listen to our Spiritual Leaders, have our aspirations, our inspirations—we make spasmodic efforts—and forget!

There is one supreme magic quality—an open sesame to morality; it makes it easy of accomplishment, smooths out our difficulties, lightens the path, makes sacrifice a pleasure, and service a joy.

It is Love. When the soul is lifted above externals, we know this.

I know a dear, high strung city girl who is making a success as a farmer's wife. She refused to have a brother-in-law live with them—he became insulting when drunk. She could bear it no longer; either he would have to leave or she would. He left. Later, her own brother came to live with them, and he began to drink to excess. She anguished over him, but she bore with him. She did not send *him* away. She *forgave*. Our first strivings must be to develop kindly feeling toward every created human being—forgiveness automatically follows.

I had a neighbor whose recent "passing over" was a translation, not a death. Two weeks before her new birth, her face became transfigured; it shone with an inner light.

"I understand now," she said to her daughter, "I understand now the meaning of life—It is love, not the kind you take in, but that which you give out. All else but love mars things!"

When are we most easily driven to strive for the best? When impelled by love. No one ever accomplishes soul growth thru any form of selfishness. The same interest and enthusiasm for the welfare of others as that for self is engendered by love. The ideal love of the individual members of a family for each other finds expression in an eagerness for the other's well-being and happiness that is coequal with one's own. Each is ready to sink his preferences for the good of the rest; the pleasures and triumphs of one are those of every other one. Their love prompts them to shield and protect. What appears to be a sacrifice is not a sacrifice at all; it is a phase of love which seeks its outlet in giving. Each loves the other as himself. Along the path of coöperation with God's plan for the evolutionary progress of the race this ideal love of a highly developed family must be extended eventually. It must grow to include the stranger within the gate, and the whole

human peoples without—all shall be embraced in the greater expansion of the love to come.

The sweetest first-born offspring of love—without which life would be as barren and dry as a sandy desert—is SERVICE.

One serves for the love of serving. The thought of return in an act of true service does not exist; on the contrary, such a suggestion repels the Spirit longing to express love with the freedom of ocean freshness. To the one served, however, reciprocal action is as instinctive as the desire of the skylark to fly. And thank God! if we cannot serve those who serve us, there is a wide, wide world of opportunity, ours for the selection. It is not a question with the love-filled soul, "Shall I serve?" but "Whom shall I serve?"

When other sources of happiness have been weighed and found wanting—and in time this is sure to come—the seeker finds that there is but one satisfactory way of existence—*the life of service.* Superimposed upon the line of growth in the soul's unfolding, it is a privilege that automatically brings happiness, joy, and content. The cry of the understanding heart translates itself—Return not to me my serving, give rather to those in need; as for me, already "My cup runneth over!" The inestimable joy of service is mine, the privilege of my life, the great necessity of my existence—for in this "I live and move and have my being."

We all belong to the One Great Soul—we are many in One as are the drops in the mighty sea. If we could but forget our separateness; if we could but immerse ourselves in the Ocean of Love. Love! It is our first duty to learn to love everybody—everywhere. Love teaches us to understand, to sympathize, to forgive; it soothes and nourishes and sustains and renews. God is Love, and when we who are His offspring approach our true divinity,

we, too, shall manifest love in all its fullness. God is Love but does not compel love; he leaves us free to love or not to love in return. But wisdom has proclaimed that we should go forth fortified with an impenetrable armor—an all conquering attitude of soul—Love, the Resistless—the Ultimate of Life!

We who search for the Mystic Way shall find it only thru an escape from the soul's entanglement in selfhood, thru service, and an inclusive love. These established, it will be possible for the soul to achieve Divinity — the consummation of the highest ideal, and the goal of earth-life. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."